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THE SPIRIT

OF

DISCIPLINE

SERMONS PREACHED BY

FRANCIS PAGET, D.D.

BISHOP OF OXFORD, HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH

TOGETHER WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY CONCERNING ACCIDIE

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ELEVENTH IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

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RICARDUM WILLELMUM CHURCH

LUCEM FIRMAMENTUM DESIDERIUM

DILECTISSIMUM ·

AMORE · PROSEQUOR ·

Preface

THE title of this book is meant to point towards a thought which under various aspects enters into most of the sermons here printed: the thought of the power which the grace of God confers on men to extend or strengthen, by dutiful self-discipline, the empire of the will. The reality of some such power is plainly suggested by the contrast between those lives in which more things seem possible year by year, and those in which more things continually seem impossible or intolerable; while if there be such power within reach, clearly a man's happiness and usefulness depend to a great extent on his seeking and exercising it. An especial task in which it may be exercised is described in the introductory essay which precedes the sermons.

Preface to the Second Edition.

He who pours out thanks for a favourable verdict runs the risk of seeming to betray not only a bad conscience, but also a poor idea of the judge's office. Yet I cannot refrain from expressing my gratitude for the generosity shown to me by those who have reviewed my book— generosity such as should help any man to work more humbly and diligently in the future.

I have added in this edition one more sermon, and a few fresh notes and references, chiefly concerning the subject of the introductory essay, the sin of Accidie.

Much might, I think, be learnt in regard to that subject by a careful study of Spinoza's conception of sadness and of joy. I have no

such knowledge of his system as would enable me to cite him without some fear lest I may by fragmentary quotations misrepresent his general teaching. But there seems much to be thought out in these definitions of sadness: "Tristitia est hominis transitio a majore ad minorem perfectionem;" "Tristitiæ affectus actus est . . . quo hominis agendi potentia minuitur vel coercetur:"[1] while, on the other hand, the attempt to bring together under the one category of "tristitia" conditions so profoundly diverse as those of hatred, humility, pity, penitence, and melancholy, discloses the severance between Christian ethics and Spinoza's, and appears to give some warrant for Mr. Maurice's remark that "when Spinoza leaves the absolute for the concrete, reason for ex-

[1] Benedicti de Spinoza Ethica, Pars III., Affectuum Definitiones; cf. III. xi. Schol., III. lix. Demonstr. Cf. also Epistolæ Herberti de Losinga, Ep. xxii. (ed. Anstruther, p. 41). "Tristitia et acidia suffocant intentionem." In the "Life, Letters, and Sermons of Herbert de Losinga" (Goulburn and Symonds) there is appended to the translation of this letter an interesting note on Accidie (vol. i. pp. 37–39).

perience, he is away from home, and has not the right use of his powers."[1]

I am indebted to the Rev. T. B. Strong for having pointed out to me a striking and beautiful passage in the "Shepherd" of Hermas,[2] where, in a warning against sadness, much that was said in later days concerning accidie is anticipated:—

"Put sadness far away from thee, saith he: for truly sadness is the sister of half-heartedness and bitterness... Array thee in the joy that always finds favour in God's sight and is acceptable with Him: yea, revel thou therein. For every one that is joyous worketh and thinketh those things that are good, and despiseth sadness. But he that is sad doth always wickedly: first because he maketh sad

[1] F. D. Maurice, "Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy," ii. 425. Cf. Benedicti de Spinoza Ethica, Pars III., Affectuum Definitiones, iii., vii., xviii., xxvii.; Pars IV. Propp. liii., liv. Spinoza's conceptions of joy and sadness are touched also in Ueberweg's "History of Philosophy," ii. 76, 77; M. Arnold's "Essays in Criticism," 275, 276; Dorner's "System of Christian Ethics," 387.

[2] Mand. x.

the Holy Spirit that hath been given to man for joy: and secondly he worketh lawlessness, in that he neither prays to God nor gives Him thanks.

"Therefore cleanse thyself from this wicked sadness, and thou shalt live unto God. Yea, unto God all they shall live who have cast out sadness from themselves, and arrayed themselves in all joy."

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD,
St. Mark's Day, 1891.

Advertisement to the Fifth Edition

I AM ashamed that I have let various hindrances, with bad husbandry of time, delay my revising this book for a new edition, and writing a fresh preface for it, until an attack of illness has made the work impossible within the set time. I am sorry for this, because I wanted to do justice, if I could, to the suggestions which friends have given me about the sin of Accidie, and about its name. This I cannot try to do at present; but one thing I may do, with some special fitness. I may own once more my gratitude to all those —known by face, by name, or by kind words that bore no name—whose friendship and help have been granted to me through this book. For the

thought of their kindness, very poorly deserved and very generously bestowed, has often been bright among all the welcome forms that move about in the quiet spaces of illness and of convalescence.

F. P.

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD,
February 3, 1893.

Preface to the Seventh Edition

I WOULD use the opportunity of a new Edition to speak of two points which I have neglected to notice duly in this book.

I. The first concerns the thought which the title of the book was meant to indicate—"the thought of the power which the grace of God confers on men to extend or strengthen, by dutiful self-discipline, the empire of the will." The tokens of that power are clear: the proof of its readiness and adequacy may fall within the experience of any man. But it is proffered, and it must be sought, for the discipline and hallowing of life in all its movements and actions: for a perfect, not a partial work. A special need may rouse the longing for it, a

special struggle may seem to engross its energy; but the desire of the heart that it garrisons, the purpose of the will that it reinforces, must be set towards nothing lower or narrower than goodness, the likeness of Christ. It would seem, indeed, to belong naturally to the power which God gives that it should be thus broadly used, without restriction or reserve: for, howsoever it may be turned at a particular time to a particular task, its true place is at the centre, not on the circumference of a man's life; it does not conquer for us, but makes us conquerors. Forgetfulness of this may underlie much disappointment and despondency in the fight against temptation: the effort for self-control and self-possession at one especial point failing just because it is not simultaneously made at all. Men say that they have tried again and again, and tried in vain, to resist a besetting sin, to attain a constant mastery over some rebellious passion. They may say it sincerely: they may have really tried: but the secret of their failure

is not in any overwhelming vehemence of the assailing force, nor in any stinting or insufficiency of God's grace: but in their own lack of desire or will or watchfulness to deal with other passions or temptations, far removed, perhaps, in apparent character and sphere, from the trial in which the defeat and discouragement is undergone. For instance, it is not strange that moods of sullenness should brood relentlessly over the heart that, though it hates its own gloom, is not prepared to forgive wholly some by-gone wrong, or to give up some unreasonable claim for deference: it is not strange that tempers should be uncertain when appetites are undisciplined, or appetites tyrannous when tempers are bad: it is not strange that thoughts should wander defiantly in prayer if there is no increase in the knowledge of God to set against the increasing host of daily cares, no sufficient vigilance against all trifling with tortuous ways and doubtful means and imperfect sincerity, or no habit of

concentration cultivated in the mind. We cannot tell where the soul may find itself betrayed, if anywhere, at any point in its defence, the will is treacherous. For the spiritual combat is one; and the Spirit of discipline comes to sanctify us wholly: and to desire victory at one point while we are contentedly failing at another may be to court disaster and repulse at both. We feel the flaw in St. Augustine's prayer for a grace that he did not wish vouchsafed at once:[1] but there is a nearer likeness to it than we may suspect in the desire that God may deliver us from evil, only not from quite all.

II. In regard to the first Sermon in this Volume, and to the Introductory Essay, some defence is needed for the assumption that accidie is the sin whose doom is told by Dante in the lines 117–126 of the seventh canto of the "Inferno." For this he nowhere says expressly:

[1] "At ego adolescens miser, valde miser, in exordio ipsius adolescentiæ etiam petieram a te castitatem, et dixeram; 'Da mihi castitatem et continentiam, sed noli modo.' Timebam enim ne me cito exaudires" ("Conf.," viii. 17).

he only puts into the mouths of those whose punishment he there describes these words—

> "Tristi fummo
> Nell' aer dolce che dal sol s'allegra,
> Portando dentro accidioso fummo;"

and several modern commentators hold that the sin which is thus confessed is not accidie, but smothered, smouldering anger.[1] This opinion has received the support of Dr. Moore; and his authority by itself would make divergence need defence.

I would venture, then, to urge, in the first place, that great weight must be allowed to the fact that all the ancient commentators take the lines as telling of accidie.[2] For on such

[1] On the other side I may refer to Tommaseo, Carlyle, Agnelli, and Vernon. Cf. "Readings on the Inferno," vol. i. pp. 233–238.

[2] For this statement I rely on the authority of Scartazzini's note on the passage (edit. 1874). Daniello da Lucca, whose commentary was printed at Venice, in 1568, seems to have been the first to diverge from the tradition. The note in "L'Ottimo Commento" is exceedingly interesting; and I cannot refrain from quoting the list of eight remedies for accidie therein prescribed. They are: to be occupied about many things; to consider future punishment; to consider the eternal reward; the company of the good; the example of him who is not lazy, but swift (wherefore the Prophet says, "He rejoiceth as a giant to run his course"); the consideration of the dangers in which we are here;

a point as this their authority is surely at its highest. They lived under the system of Christian ethics which was in Dante's mind: in moral treatises, homilies, counsels, self-examinations, ecclesiastical discipline, they must, I suppose, have been familiar with the sevenfold classification of sins, and, more or less, with the affinities and subdivisions and connecting links that ran through the list. Doubtless the list varied in detail; but its variations show (somewhat as dialectic modifications may in the case of a language) how real and living and practical a thing it was: how genuine and proper a form of thought to those who then used it. They would read the "Commedia" with minds to which this arrangement and diagnosis and delineation of sins was known, not simply as a subject of study,

that which the Lord teaches in Lev. vii., where He says, "the fire on the altar," etc. (Query, vi. 13, "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out"); the sovereign remedy, the grace of God. Cf. "Destructorium Vitiorum" (compiled in 1429, printed at Nuremberg in 1496), pars v. cap. xxii. (For the knowledge of this elaborate and copious work, I am indebted to the Rev. T. B. Strong.)

but as a matter of current acceptance in daily life. If, then, as they came to these lines and wrote their comments on them, they said with one accord that the souls swamped in the filth were the souls of the *accidiosi*; if they all felt that at this point in the "Inferno" they were meant to bethink themselves of accidie, their judgment seems hardly to be set aside.

But, further, the very close connection which, according to this view, Dante indicates between anger and accidie, is in accordance with the teaching which seems to have acted most strongly on his mind. Scartazzini says that, in his classification of sinners, he followed in part the scheme of Hugh of St. Victor, shown in the "Arbor Vitiorum." On that dismal tree, "tristitia," with "accidia" on one twig of it, comes out of the branch opposite to that of "ira:" and in the preceding treatise, "De Fructibus Carnis," the chapter "De Ira et Comitatu ejus" is immediately followed by the chapter "De Tristitia seu Accidia et Comitatu ejus:" the

"comitatus tristitiæ" includes "rancor:" "accidia" is defined as "ex nimia confusione animi nata tristitia sive tœdium, vel *amaritudo animi nimia*, qua jucunditas spiritalis extinguitur et quodam desperationis principio, mens in seipsa subvertitur."[1] Two points are to be noted here; not only the juxtaposition[2] and affinity of accidie to anger, but also the fact that "tristitia" and "accidia" are spoken of as though they were virtually identical. Further, both these points appear in the language of Dante's great teacher, St. Thomas Aquinas. Accidie, in

[1] Hugonis de Sancto Victore Opera, ii. 115, seq. (edit. 1588). Similarly, St. Gregory had placed "tristitia" next to "ira:" and foremost among its offspring had placed "malitia" and "rancor" (Moralium, lib. xxxi. cap. xlv. § 88).—It should be noted that the treatise, "De Fructibus Carnis," is ascribed to Hugh of St. Victor with some hesitation.

[2] I am indebted to Dr. Moore for the knowledge that the same juxtaposition is to be found also in St. Bonaventura and in Brunetto Latini.—Cf. S. Bonaventuræ Opera, tom. vi. p. 64; tom. vii. pp. 48, 737. Brunetto Latini "Il Tesoretto," in "Raccolta di Rime Antiche Toscane," i. 89. The connection is traced in the treatise, "Destructorium Vitiorum," VI. ii., "Ira cum non possit se vindicare tristatur et sic ex eâ nascitur accidia."—In the "Tesoro" of Brunetto Latini "accidia" is not placed in juxtaposition to "ira;" but in the list of the vices that issue from "accidia," the first is "malizia," and the last is "diletto del male" (vii. 82). Cf. "Confessionale de Santo Antonino," p. 37 (edit. 1543).

the sequence of his thoughts, stands next in one instance to anger, in another to hatred: with envy it has a special affinity, in that both alike are forms of "tristitia:"[1] and St. Thomas not only approves of St. Gregory's substituting "tristitia" for "accidia" in his list of sins, but unhesitatingly quotes as written of "accidia" what St. Gregory wrote of "tristitia," and speaks himself of "accidia" as a "species tristitiæ."[2]

[1] Cf. infra, "Introductory Essay," pp. 14–16.

[2] Cf. "Summa Theologica," 1ma 2æ xxxv. 8; lxxxiv. 4; 2da 2æ xxxv. 4.—The wide prevalence of the association and connection of ideas here indicated is shown by some most interesting passages of early English literature. They occur in volumes published by the Early English Text Society; and I owe the knowledge of them to the kindness of Professor York Powell. In a volume of homilies of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, believed to be compiled from older documents of the eleventh century, there is a homily "concerning eight vices and twelve abuses of this age." The fourth in the list is "ira;" the fifth is "tristitia," that is, "sorrow of this world; when the man sorroweth altogether too much for the loss of his wealth, which he hath loved too much, and chideth then with God, and increaseth his sin." Over against this stands the fifth virtue, "Spiritalis lætitia, that is, ghostly bliss, that the man rejoice in God amidst the sorrows of this stark world." In the "Mirror of St. Edmund," the third deadly sin is anger, and the fourth is sloth, which makes a man's heart heavy and slow in good deed, and makes him to be weary in prayer or holiness, and puts him in the wickedness of despair; for it slackens the liking of ghostly love. (In the Latin "Speculum Spiritualium," which bears no name, but is printed together with a treatise by Rolle of Hampole, who died in 1349,

If these two points are borne in mind and duly emphasized; if it be remembered that those whose schemes of moral theology meant most to Dante, had placed anger and accidie in constant neighbourhood, and been wont to recognize accidie either under its own name or under that of "tristizia;"—it then seems

"accidia" follows "ira," and one form of it is said to be "quædam amaritudo mentis, qua nihil salubre libet: tædio pascitur: fastidit consortium hominum.") A little later than Dante's time comes "The Vision concerning Piers the Plowman." Here the other aspect of accidie takes prominence. It is represented by a priest, and appears in traits (most powerfully drawn) of stupid neglect, indifference, forgetfulness, and ignorance about all acts of devotion, penance, meditation, and charity. It is a loutish, selfish, gross, shameless sort of sluggishness, in which ingratitude is especially marked. A similar, but less coarse, type of accidie is indicated in the "Instructions for Parish Priests," by John Myrc, where the questions about the sin almost all point towards slackness and irreverence about religious duties; *e.g.*—

> "Hast thou been slow and taken no heed
> To teach thy god-children pater-noster and creed?"
>
> "Hast thou come to church late,
> And spoken of sin by the gate?"
>
> "Hast thou spared for hot or cold
> To go to church when thou were hold?"

The first of these questions is curiously illustrated by a passage in Robert of Brunne's "Handlyng Synne" (written 1303, founded on "Le Manuel des Pechiez," by William of Wadington), where "Syre Ely" is cited as showing sloth or "accyde" in neglecting to deal duly with Hophni and Phinehas. Sloth appears in this striking treatise as the special sin of rich men.

very hard to doubt that, if Dante had been asked where the souls of the impenitent "accidiosi" were to be found, he would have pointed towards those who were suffering in the same circle with the angry, and gurgling in their throats the gloomy chant—

> "*Tristi* fummo
> Nel aer dolce che dal sol s'allegra,
> Portando dentro *accidioso* fummo."

Certainly, if he did not intend his readers at this point to think of the sin of accidie, he used language curiously apt to bring about what he did not intend.[1]

The strongest of the objections to the opinion here maintained seems that which is drawn from the difference between the sin that is described in the seventh canto of the "Inferno," where there

[1] A further sign that these "tristi" are the "accidiosi," appears in lines 125, 126—

> "Quest' inno si gorgoglian nella strozza,
> Che dir nol posson con parola integra."

For dulness, languor, flagging of the voice, especially in psalmody, was a well-marked symptom of accidie. Cf. Benvenuto "Da Imola," quoted in Vernon, "Readings on the Inferno," i. 256; and *infra*, "Introductory Essay," pp. 12–14.

is no express mention of the element of sloth, and the presentation of accidie in the seventeenth and eighteenth of the "Purgatorio," where nothing so positive or malignant as sullenness is portrayed; where the sin seems to be simply indifference, or lethargy, or faint-heartedness concerning good—

> "L'amor del bene, scemo
> Di suo dover."[1]

The contrast certainly is strange, and, at first sight, it may seem abrupt. I have tried, in the Introductory Essay,[2] to show the links in the chain of thought that spans it, and to suggest some reason for the different portrayal of the sin where its doom is shown in Hell, and where its expiation is shown in Purgatory. What I would here urge is that, though we may wonder that Dante has done nothing to mitigate the contrast or to help us to identify the object which he presents to us in aspects so dissimilar, the two pictures are both equally derived from traits

[1] "Purgatorio," xvii. 85, 86.

[2] Cf. infra, pp. 16–21, 41.

which met in the complex idea of accidie current in his day. If he treats accidie in one passage as a form of anger, and in the other passage as a form of sloth, he is merely selecting two aspects, or elements, which had been held together in the comprehensive conception of a single temptation, a single offence against God, at all events since the days of Cassian. "Rancor" and "torpor" stand side by side in Hugh of St. Victor's account of the suite attendant on "tristitia." They are offshoots of the same bough in his Tree of Vices; and the contrast between ill-tempered gloom and slothful apathy can hardly have seemed irreconcilable or unbridged to men who were accustomed to think of them as symptoms of one and the same sin—the sin, I believe, which, in its extreme development, finds its doom in the Fifth Circle of the Inferno, and, chastened by the grace of penitence, is put away on the Fourth Circle of Purgatory.[1] For "*Accidia*

[1] Concerning the distinctions and stages in the downward course of accidie, cf. S. Thomas Aquinas, S. Th. 2da 2dæ, xxxv.; "Destructorium Vitiorum," v i.; Caietanus, "Summula de Peccatis," pp. 15–17 (edit. 1568); "Confessionale de Santo Antonino," p. 37.

negli antichi non ha solamente senso d'inerzia, ma d'ogni non buona tristezza e d'ogni malinconia maligna, e però può comprendere anco l'invidia iraconda."[1] Sometimes it seems as though those ancients had looked deeper into their own hearts than we are apt to look in days of wider activity and more general information; and I venture to think that there is something beyond a literary interest in realizing that, to Dante's mind, sullenness was but another phase of sluggish indifference to a man's true calling and to the goodness of God.[2]

[1] Niccolò Tommaseo, quoted by Giovanni Agnelli, "Topo-cronografia del Viaggio Dantesco," pp. 50, 51.

[2] I cannot forego quoting one more passage of early English ethics. Professor York Powell has kindly translated it for me from the "Ayenbite of Inwyt" (or "Remorse of Conscience"), a Kentish version (by Dan Michel of Northgate) of a French treatise composed in 1279 for the use of Philip the Second of France. A long passage deals with the "disinclination to do well," which makes men have bad beginning, bad amending, and worse ending. The *beginning* is spoilt by lack of zealous love of the Lord, by cowardice in endurance, by idleness, by heaviness and somnolence, by perverseness, by little will and fearfulness. The *amending* is spoilt by untruthfulness, sloth, forgetfulness, slackness, weariness, the utter failure of the recreant.—Then come the six points of sloth that bring a man to his *end*. "The first is disobedience, when the man will not do what he is told in penance, or when he is bidden something that he thinketh hard he excuseth himself that he may not do it, or if he undertakes

III. I had desired to speak of the beautiful chapter upon accidie in Gerard of Zutphen's treatise, "De Spiritualibus Ascensionibus," and of the passages that approach the subject in Fénelon's counsels, "Sur la Dissipation et sur la Tristesse;"[1] and, lastly, to say something of that noble and pathetic illustration of the grace set over against accidie—the grace of fortitude—which is given in the pages of Sir Walter Scott's "Journal." But this preface has already passed its bounds; and I will only cite one sentence from Fénelon (we have lately learnt, on high authority,

it he doth it little or naught. The second point is impatience, for as he may not bear anything obediently he cannot endure patiently, so that none dare to speak to him for his good. The third is grudging, for when men speak to him for his good he writheth and grudgeth and thinketh that men despise him, and thereof he falleth into sorrow, that is the fourth vice.

"And so greatly doth sorrow overcome him that all that men say to him, all that men do for him, all that he heareth, all that he seeth, all this is a grief to him, and so he falleth into sorrow and into its being a grief to him to live; so that he himself hasteneth and desireth his death. And that is the fifth vice.

"After all these sorrowful points of sloth, the Devil giveth him the deadly stroke, and putteth him into wanhope [despair]. . . . To such end sloth leadeth a man. These be eighteen points that the Devil throweth upon the slothful. It is no wonder that he loseth the game."

[1] "Œuvres Spirituelles," tom. i. pp. 172-194, edit. 1740.

his place among the guides of thought and life[1]): "Il n'est pas question de ce qu'on sent, mais de ce qu'on veut." It may be impossible at times to feel what one would: it is not impossible to will what one should; and that, if the will be real and honest, is what matters most. Unhappiness may come on men, and hopes may fail, and anxiety or overwork may take the spring out of life, so that months and years may seem "as the climbing up a sandy way is to the feet of the aged." Within the experience of many lives there come conditions under which any natural buoyancy flags and dies away, and even the effect of grace seems bounded to endurance, quietness, and hope. "Heaviness may endure for a night;" and though it be but for a night, it is, indeed, heaviness. But all never can be lost, and more than we can imagine may be gained, if the purpose of the will is kept towards goodness, towards God: if honestly we

[1] Lord Acton, "On the Study of History," p. 13: "It is the vision of a higher world to be intimate with the character of Fénelon."

do the best we can, if honestly we long and strive to do better; never beckoning the darkness to us, never finding a rebellious and sullen satisfaction in its depth, never slighting any light from God, any gentleness from men, any cry for our help, that may lead us out again into the brightness. "Les découragements intérieurs font aller plus vîte que tout le reste, dans la voie de la foi, pourvû qu'ils ne nous arrêtent point." "Un pas fait en cet état est toujours un pas de géant." "Il n'y a donc qu'à mépriser notre découragement et qu'à aller toujours, pour rendre cet état de foiblesse plus utile et plus grand que celui du courage et de la force la plus héroique."[1] "In the way of Thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for Thee; to Thy Name and to Thy memorial is the desire of our soul." Those who can so sustain throughout the days of darkness the dutiful intention of desire and will, may find

[1] Cf. "Speculum Spiritualium," cap. xvii., "Possibile est enim aliquem multo plus mereri in pugna laboris pro obtinenda devotione quam si magnæ devotionis foret sine labore: quia de isto forsitan posset extolli, et meritum diminui: de illo autem cor humiliatur."

that, in the weary hours of the night, they have been moving more directly and more speedily than they thought towards the haven where they would be.—For there is, I think, in the spiritual life an experience somewhat like that of which a trawler in the West of England told me. He said that sometimes through a dark night, when on the deck the air is dull and heavy, and there seems to be a dead calm, there may be wind enough astir, not many feet above the sea, to catch the topsail and carry the sloop along; so that at daybreak it is found further on its course than the men, for all their keen sense of seafaring, had ever thought it could be.

F. P.

CHRIST CHURCH,
Lent, 1896.

Contents

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

PAGE

CONCERNING ACCIDIE, ... 1

I. THE SORROW OF THE WORLD.

"*The sorrow of the world worketh death.*"—2 COR. VII. 10, ... 51

II. LEISURE THOUGHTS.

"*Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*"—PHIL. IV. 8, ... 69

III. THE HOPE OF THE BODY.

"*Glorify God in your body.*"—1 COR. VI. 20, ... 80

IV. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT.

"*Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*"—2 COR. III. 17, . . . 100

V. THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

"*Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*"—1 COR. XIII. 12, ... 111

VI. DRUDGERY AND HEROISM.

PAGE

"I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."—St. John vi. 38, ... 120

VII. THE PERILS OF THE VACANT HEART.

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."—St. Matt. xii. 43–45, ... 131

VIII. THE DISASTERS OF SHALLOWNESS.

"Some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture."—St. Luke viii. 6.

"When the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away."—St. Matt. xiii. 6, ... 142

IX. HALF-HEARTEDNESS.

"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."—St. James i. 8, . . 152

X. THE IMAGE OF THE LORD.

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my Gospel."—2 Tim. ii. 8, ... 162

XI. THE EFFICACY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST.

"From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—2 Tim. iii. 15, ... 174

XII. THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE.

PAGE

"*Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more.*"—Rom. vi. 9, . . . 191

XIII. A NEW HEART.

"*But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*"—Acts iv. 19, 20, . . 201

XIV. THE CONTRASTS OF THIS WORLD.

"*Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*"—St. Luke xvi. 25, ... 213

XV. HUMILITY AND ASPIRATION.

"*What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him?*"—Ps. viii. 4, ... 223

XVI. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF INHERITANCE.

"*Freely ye have received, freely give.*"—St. Matt. x. 8, ... 234

XVII. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STRENGTH.

"*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.*"—Rom. xv. 1, ... 244

XVIII. OLD AND YOUNG.

"*I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that*

PAGE

is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."—1 St. John ii. 12–14, ... 262

XIX. SIN AND LAW.

"The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law."—1 Cor. xv. 56, ... 279

XX. THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.

"The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." —St. John i. 5, ... 293

XXI. A GOOD EXAMPLE.

Bishop Andrewes: his Time and Work, ... 303

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

CONCERNING ACCIDIE.

> "Yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land, and gave no credence unto His word; but murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord."

MOST men may know that strange effect of vividness and reality with which at times a disclosure of character and experience in some old book seems to traverse the intervening centuries, and to touch the reader with a sense of sudden nearness to the man who so was tried, so felt and thought, so failed or conquered, very long ago. We are prepared, of course, for likeness, and even for monotony, in the broad aspect of that ceaseless conflict through which men come to be and to show what they are; for the main conditions of a man's probation stand like birth and death, like childhood, and youth, and age, awaiting every human soul, behind the immense diversity of outward circumstance. We expect that the inner history of man will go on repeating itself in these general traits; but when, out of an age whose ways

imagination hardly represents to us with any clearness, there comes the exact likeness of some feature or deformity which we had thought peculiar to ourselves or our contemporaries, we may be almost startled by the claim thus made to moral kinship and recognition. We knew that it never had been easy to refuse the evil and choose the good; we guessed that at all times, if a man's will faltered, there were forces ready to help him quietly and quickly on the downward road; but that centuries ago men felt, in minute detail, the very same temptations, subtle, complex, and resourceful, which we to-day find hiding and busy in the darker passages of our hearts, is often somewhat unreasonably surprising to us. For we are apt, perhaps, to overrate the intensive force of those changes which have extended over all the surface of civilized life. We forget how little difference they may have brought to that which is deepest in us all. It is, indeed, true that the vast increase of the means of self-expression and self-distraction increases for many men the temptation to empoverish life at its centre for the sake of its ever-widening circumference; it may be harder to be simple and thoughtful, easier to be multifariously worldly now than once it was; but the inmost quality, the secret history, of a selfish choice or

a sullen mood, and the ingredients of a bad temper, are, probably, nearly what they were in quieter days; and there seems sometimes a curious sameness in the tricks that men play with conscience, and in the main elements of a soul's tragedy.

The Bible is the supreme, decisive witness to this profound identity in the experience, the discipline, the needs of man through all generations. It is, indeed, greatly to be wished that people would realize rather more adequately the prerogative distinction which the Bible has in this (besides all other traits by which it stands alone), that it does thus speak to every age; that, through the utmost change of circumstances, it is found to penetrate with unchanged precision the hidden folds and depths of human character; that it can be at once universal and intimate in its sympathy. It is a sign of true greatness in a man if he can more freely than most men transcend even the pettier external differences of this world; but to be unchecked by the revolutions of centuries, and the severing barriers of continents and races, unchecked in piercing to the deepest elements of each man's being, unchecked in knowing him, with all his grandeur and his meanness, his duplicity and folly, his restlessness and fear and faint-heartedness and aspiration,—it is hard to think

to whom this freedom could belong, save to the King of the ages, the Creator and the Judge of all men. Surely any one who realizes how the life of Jesus Christ, told in the four Gospels, has found and formed the saints of every generation, and what the Psalms have been to them, may feel fairly confident of this to start with — that in human life the recurrent rhythms of spiritual experience are profound and subtle, and that the Bible comes to us from One Who, with unerring and universal insight, knows what is in man.[1]

This constancy and freshness of the Bible's power for the discipline of character is the central and decisive witness to the substantial constancy of our needs and dangers, our difficulties and capacities; for in every age he who bends over the Bible and peers into its depths,[2] may feel at times almost as though his own life must have been in some strange way lived before, when the words that speak to him so intimately were written down. But elsewhere also, as one would expect, one comes on hints and fragments in which the same deep constancy is betrayed, and that which seemed most closely

[1] Cf. W. Bright, "Lessons from the Lives of Three Great Fathers," Appendix iii., and the Bishop of Derry's "Bampton Lectures," Lectures iv. and viii. Cf. also Archbishop Trench's Hulsean Lectures for 1845, on "The Fitness of Holy Scripture for unfolding the Spiritual Life of Men."

[2] Cf. St. James i. 25.

characteristic of one's self is found to have been no less vivid and intimate in the experience of men severed from those of the present day by the uttermost unlikeness in all the conditions of their life. We may be somewhat surprised when we discover how precisely Pascal, or Shakespeare, or Montaigne can put his finger on our weak point, or tell us the truth about some moral lameness or disorder of which we, perhaps, were beginning to accept a more lenient and comfortable diagnosis. But when a poet, controversialist and preacher of the Eastern Church, under the dominion of the Saracens, or an anchoret of Egypt, an Abbot of Gaul, in the sixth century, tells us, in the midst of our letters, and railway journeys, and magazines, and movements, exactly what it is that on some days makes us so singularly unpleasant to ourselves and to others—tells us in effect that it is not simply the east wind, or dyspepsia, or overwork, or the contrariness of things in general, but that it is a certain subtle and complex trouble of our own hearts, which we perhaps have never had the patience or the frankness to see as it really is; that he knew it quite well, only too well for his own happiness and peace, and that he can put us in a good way of *dealing* with it—the very strangeness of the intrusion from such a quarter

into our most private affairs may secure for him a certain degree of our interest and attention.

There may be those who will be drawn by some such interest to weigh what has been said at various times about the temptation and the sin with which the first sermon in this volume is concerned—the temptation and the sin of accidie. The present writer was some years ago brought to think a little about the subject by a striking and suggestive passage in the fifth chapter of Maria Francesca Rossetti's "Shadow of Dante," and by the vivid words quoted from Chaucer in Mr. Carlyle's note on the hundred and twenty-third line of the seventh canto of the "Inferno." The reference to St. Thomas Aquinas in the "Shadow of Dante" led on to Cassian; and the Benedictine Commentary on Cassian pointed to some others who had added more or less to the recognition of this "enemie to every estate of man," this deep and complex peril of men's strength and happiness. It may be shown that there are not wanting, in the life and literature of the present day, signs of the persistence and reality of that peril; and it will perhaps be worth while to gather together in this essay some of those passages in which, under widely diverse circumstances, and in generations many centuries apart, men have spoken what may always seem home-

truths about the sin of accidie. No pretence can be made to a thorough treatment of the subject, nor to the learning which such a treatment would require; but a few representative witnesses may be gathered out of four distinct groups of writers, and these may be enough to show how steadily the plague has hung and hangs about the lives of men, while they may perhaps help some of us to see it as it is, and to deal with it as we ought.

I. Cassian, whose long life nearly covers the latter half of the fourth century and the former half of the fifth, may be placed first in the first group of those who have written concerning ἀκηδία, acedia, or accidie.[1] Trained during his early years in a monastery at Bethlehem, he had spent a long time among the hermits of the Thebaid, before he turned to his great work of planting in the far West the monasticism of the East, founding his two communities at Marseilles, and writing his twelve books, "De Coenobiorum Institutis,"[2] and his "Collationes Patrum in

[1] Concerning the orthography of the Greek word there can be no doubt. The Latin form here given is that employed, *e.g.*, by Cassian and by St. Thomas Aquinas, and justly defended by the Benedictine Commentator on Cassian: in Cic. ad Att. xii. 45 the Greek word is used. The English form, while, in common with the Italian, it conceals the derivation of the word, has the decisive sanction of Dr. Murray's Dictionary, *q.v.*; cf. also Ducange, *s.v.*

[2] Entitled by some, "De Institutis Renuntiantium." On the life

Scythica Eremo Commorantium." The tenth book of the former work is entitled "De Spiritu Acediæ;" and in the first chapter of that book he gives a provisional and somewhat scanty indication of its subject. "Acedia" may be called a weariness or distress of heart; it is akin to sadness; the homeless and solitary hermits, those who live in the desert, are especially assailed by it, and monks find it most troublesome about twelve o'clock: so that some of the aged have held it to be "the sickness that destroyeth in the noonday," the "dæmonium meridianum" of the ninety-first psalm. But the most striking part of all that Cassian has to say about accidie is the description in the second chapter of a monk who is suffering from a bad attack of the malady. When the poor fellow is beset by it, he says, it makes him detest the place where he is, and loathe his cell; and he has a poor and scornful opinion of his brethren, near and far, and thinks that they are neglectful and unspiritual. It makes him sluggish and inert for every task; he cannot sit still, nor give his mind to reading; he thinks despondently how little progress he has made where he is, how little good he gains or

of Cassian, cf. P. Freeman, "Principles of Divine Service," v. 1. i. pp. 249–273, and I. Gregory Smith's article in the "Dictionary of Christian Biography." There is a very elaborate account of his work, published at Lyons in 1652, by J. B. Quesnay, S.J.

does,—he, who might so well direct and help others and who, where he is, has nobody to teach and nobody to edify. He dwells much on the excellence of other and distant monasteries; he thinks how profitable and healthy life is there; how delightful the brethren are, and how spiritually they talk. On the contrary, where he is, all seems harsh and untoward; there is no refreshment for his soul to be got from his brethren, and none for his body from the thankless land. At last he thinks he really cannot be saved if he stops where he is; and then, about eleven or twelve o'clock, he feels as tired as if he had walked miles, and as hungry as if he had fasted for two or three days. He goes out and looks this way and that, and sighs to think that there is no one coming to visit him; he saunters to and fro, and wonders why the sun is setting so slowly; and so, with his mind full of stupid bewilderment and shameful gloom, he grows slack and void of all spiritual energy, and thinks that nothing will do him any good save to go and call on somebody, or else to betake himself to the solace of sleep. Whereupon his malady suggests to him that there are certain persons whom he clearly ought to visit, certain kind inquiries that he ought to make, a religious lady upon whom he ought to call, and to

whom he may be able to render some service; and that it will be far better to do this than to sit profitless in his cell.

In two later chapters Cassian traces some of the results which follow from the lax and desultory dissipation of the inner life that is thus allowed. But the main part of the book is taken up with the praises of hard work, as the true safeguard against accidie; especial stress being laid on the counsel and example of St. Paul in this regard; and mention being made of a certain abbot who, to keep himself busy and steady his thoughts and drive off this temptation, toiled all through the year, and every year burnt all the produce of his labour; the excuse for this economic enormity lying in the fact that he lived so far from a town, that the carriage of the produce would have cost more than its market price.

Much, however, which other writers link with accidie is assigned by Cassian to sadness, of which he speaks in the preceding book, "De Spiritu Tristitiæ." The severance of sadness from accidie is deliberately censured by St. Thomas Aquinas; and certainly the sullen gloom which Cassian describes in this ninth book forms a congenial and integral part in the complex trouble which accidie generally denotes, while it is clearly present in that picture

of the "accidious" monk which has just been cited from Cassian himself. Thus we may fairly perhaps complete, from the delineation of "Tristitia," the conception of "Acedia." For the sadness of which Cassian speaks is the gloom of those who ought not to be sad, who wilfully allow a morbid sombreness to settle down on them; it is a mood which severs a man from thoughts of God, "and suffers him not to be calm and kindly to his brethren." "Sometimes, without any provoking cause,[1] we are suddenly depressed by so great sorrowfulness, that we cannot greet with wonted courtesy the coming even of those who are dear and near to us, and all they say in conversation, however appropriate it may be, we think annoying and unnecessary,[2] and have no pleasant answer for it, because the gall of bitterness fills all the recesses of our soul." Those who are sad after this fashion have, as St. Gregory says, anger already close to them; for from sadness such as this come forth (as he says in another place) malice, grudging, faint-heartedness, despair, torpor as to that which is commanded, and the straying of the mind after that which is forbidden.[3]

[1] Cf. "Collationes Patrum," Collatio V., cap. ix.

[2] Cf. F. W. Faber, "Growth in Holiness," p. 214.

[3] S. Gregorii, "Reg. Past.," III. iii.; "Moralium," liber xxxi.

The Κλῖμαξ, or *Scala Paradisi*, from which St. John of the Ladder takes his distinctive title, rests on the experience of some sixty years spent in the ascetic life. It was composed after the writer had been called from his solitude as an anchoret, to become Abbot of the Monastery of Mount Sinai, at the age of seventy-five. He speaks of ἀκηδία with striking force and vividness; it is one of the offshoots of talkativeness—a slackness of the soul and remissness of the mind, a contempt of holy exercise, a hatred of one's profession; it extols the blessedness of a worldly life, and speaks against God as merciless and unloving; it makes singing languid, prayer feeble, service stubborn. So peculiarly does it tell upon the voice, that when there is no psalmody, it may remain unnoticed; but when the psalms are being sung, it causes its victim to interrupt the verse with an untimely yawn.—Then ἀκηδία is personified. She sees the cell of the anchoret and laughs to herself, and goes and settles down close by him. She suggests all sorts of good reasons why he well may leave his prayers and gad about. She recalls to him the words of Scripture as to the Christian duty of visiting the sick; and in the middle of his

§§ 87–89. Cf. S. Isidorus Hispalensis, "Quæstiones in V. T.," in Deuteronomium, xvi.

devotions she reminds him of urgent business to be done elsewhere. Lastly, in a fine and instructive passage, the voice of accidie is heard, acknowledging what forces are her allies and her enemies. "They who summon me are many; sometimes it is dulness and senselessness of soul that bids me come, sometimes it is forgetfulness of things above; ay, and there are times when it is the excess of toil. My adversaries are the singing of psalms and the labour of the hands; the thought of death is my enemy, but that which kills me outright is prayer, with the sure hope of glory."[1]

It seems strange at first, but true to facts when one begins to think, that accidie should be thus linked both with talkativeness and with that deadness and dulness of the voice which seems to be indicated by ἀτονία ψαλμῳδίας. Similarly St. Isidore of Seville[2] puts gossiping and curiosity together with listlessness and somnolence among the troubles born of accidie; and St. John of Damascus defines ἄχος (which the commentators seem to identify with accidie) as a grief which engenders voicelessness.[3] The comment

[1] S. Joannes Climacus, "Scala Paradisi," xiii.; cf. xxvii. 2.

[2] S. Isidorus Hispalensis, "Quæstiones in V. T.," in Deut. cap. xvi.

[3] S. Joannes Damasc., "De Orth. Fid.," ii. 14, λύπη ἀφωνίαν ἐμποιοῦσα, v. ed. Basil., 1548

appended to these words directly applies the definition to the sin of accidie, which is "a sorrowfulness so weighing down the mind that there is no good it likes to do. It has attached to it as its inseparable comrade a distress and weariness of soul, and a sluggishness in all good works, which plunges the whole man into lazy languor, and works in him a constant bitterness. And out of this vehement woe springs silence and a flagging of the voice, because the soul is so absorbed and taken up with its own indolent dejection, that it has no energy for utterance, but is cramped and hampered and imprisoned in its own confused bewilderment, and has not a word to say."

II. Concerning the witness of two mediæval teachers, St. Thomas Aquinas and Dante, something has been said in the course of the first sermon in this volume; and the writer has no hope of speaking at all worthily about those profound, majestic ways of thought in which they, with their great companions and disciples, move. He would only try to suggest for inquiry or consideration three points which seem especially needed to supplement what he was trying to convey in the sermon.

(*a*) The first is the affinity which St. Thomas marks between accidie and envy. Both alike are forms

of sinful gloom, antagonists to that joy which stands second in the bright list of the effects of *Caritas*. But the joy that comes of *Caritas* is twofold: there is the joy that is found in God, the quiet exultation of the soul that knows His goodness and His love, the joy of loving Him; and there is also the joy which concerns one's neighbour's good, the gladness of the soul that feels a brother's welfare or happiness exactly as its own, and freely, simply yields to the delight of seeing others rightly glad. Neither, it may be, can perfectly be realized in this life; but neither is unknown—that is begun in "the way," which is to be made perfect in "the country."[1] And over against these two fair gifts of pure and self-forgetful joy there stand, in hard and awful contrast, the two unlovely sorts of sinful gloom:[2] the gloom of accidie, which is "tristitia de bono divino"—a sorrowful despondency, or listlessness concerning the good things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; and the gloom of envy, which is "tristitia de bono proximi"—the gloom of him

> "Who so much fears the loss of power,
> Fame, favour, glory (shall his fellow mate

[1] Cf. S. Th. 2ª 2ᵃᵉ, xxviii. 3.

[2] Cf. S. Th. 2ª 2ᵃᵉ, xxxiii., xxxv. (*ad fin.*), xxxvi

> Above him), and so sickens at the thought,
> He loves their opposite: "[1]

the gloom of the soul that sullenly broods over the prosperity of others till their success seems, to its sick fancy, like a positive wrong against itself. Thus envy may stand side by side with accidie; and in both we see that sorrow of the world, that heavy, wilful, wasteful sadness, which is as alien from the divinely quickened sorrow of repentance as it is from the divinely quickened joy of love.

(*b*) In the second place, there seems to be reality and justice, as well as comfort, in the distinction which St. Thomas draws in answering the question whether accidie is a deadly sin:—the distinction between its complete and incomplete development. Fully formed, discerned and recognized by the reason, and deepened by its assent, it is a deadly sin, driving from the heart the characteristic joy of the spiritual life, and setting itself in irreconcilable antagonism to that love which is inseparably linked with the Divine indwelling. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace;" and these cannot live in the heart that deliberately yields itself up to a despondent renunciation of all care and hope and effort concerning its

[1] Dante, "Purgatorio," xvii. 118–120 (Cary's translation). Cf. Ar. Rhet., ii. x 1, with Mr. Cope's note.

true calling and its highest good. But there is also a venial sort of accidie: a reluctance that is not deliberate, nor confirmed and hardened by a wilful choice; a sloth engendered by the persistent hanging back of a man's lower nature, which only a continuous exertion will keep up to the level or ambition of the higher life.[1]—It is with a curious answer that St. Thomas meets the contention that accidie can never be a deadly sin because it violates no precept of the Law of God. It violates, he replies, the commandment concerning the hallowing of the seventh day: for the moral import of that commandment is to bid us rest in the Lord; and gloominess concerning the good which is of God is contrary to that rest.[2]

(*c*) The different aspect of the sin of accidie in the "Inferno," where it has plunged on into the very depths of sullenness and gloom and wrath, and in the "Purgatorio," where only thoughts of sloth and of lukewarmness are prominent, is remarkable; and the contrast seems to find its explanation in that view of the various stages towards the finishing[3] of the

[1] Cf. A. Lehmkuhl, "Theologia Moralis," vol. i. § 740.

[2] S. Th. 2^{da} 2^{dae}, xxxv. 3, ad primum. (Cf. also, as bearing on St Thomas' conception of accidia, S. Th. 1^{ma}, lxiii. 2, ad secundum; 2^{da} 2^{dae}, clviii. 5; and "Quæstiones de Malo," Qu. xi.

[3] St. James i. 15.

sin which is presented by St. Thomas. Dante's teaching as to its beginning is given towards the close of the seventeenth canto; and it is very clearly brought out by Mr. Vernon in his "Readings in the Purgatorio." "Virgil begins to discourse at considerable length on the origin and cause from which the seven principal sins are derived, and he says that love is the cause of all." "He apparently means that pride, envy, and anger arise from the love of evil against one's neighbour; *accidia*, or sloth, from a tardy desire of discerning and acquiring the true good. The three remaining sins, avarice, gluttony, and self-indulgence, spring from an excessive love or desire of what is not the true good." Similarly Mr. Vernon quotes Benvenuto as saying that "*accidia* is a defective love of the highest good, which we ought to seek for ardently. It is, therefore, a kind of negligence, a tepid lukewarm condition, and as it were a contempt for acquiring the desirable amount of goodness."[1] And so the last two instances of accidie, which are brought before us in the eighteenth canto, are instances in which a great vocation was dismally forfeited through faint heartedness, through lack of faith and courage. For accidie was a part,

[1] W. W. Vernon, "Readings in the Purgatorio of Dante," i. 455. Cf. M. F. Rossetti, "A Shadow of Dante," pp. 114, 117

at least, of their sin who "would not go up" to win "that pleasant land," but "murmured in their tents;" to whom God sware "that they should not enter into His rest," "because of unbelief;" and of their sin, too, who forewent the glory of "a share in founding the great Roman Empire," the degenerate, slothful band, who stayed behind in Sicily—

"Who dared not hazard life for future fame."[1]

The various phases of restlessness and discontent, of sullenness, and hardening, and resentment, and rebellion, through which the defective love of good passes into the horrid, dismal mood, which is shown in the seventh canto of the "Inferno," are described by St. Thomas when he is answering the question whether accidie ought to be set down as a capital sin.[2] But they are shown, somewhat less systematically, it may be, yet with the finest power and vividness, by Chaucer, whose account of accidie, in "The Persones Tale," may fitly stand with those which have been cited in this second group. It seems as though nothing could be more forcible and arresting than the picture he has drawn of it; in which this especially is noteworthy, that from the first he fastens on the traits of irritation and ill

[1] Verg., Æn., v. 751.

[2] S. Th. 2^da 2^dae, xxxv. 4, "Quæstiones de Malo," Qu. xi. 4.

temper as essentially characteristic of it. "Bitternesse is mother of accidie;" and "accidie is the anguish of a trouble[1] herte," and "maketh a man hevy, thoughtful, and wrawe."[2] Then, in four stages, the great misery and harmfulness of the sin is shown. "It doth wrong to Jesu Crist, inasmoche as it benimeth[3] the service that men shulde do to Crist with alle diligence;" to the three estates, of innocence, of sinfulness, of grace alike, "is accidie enemie and contrary, for he loveth no besinesse at all;" it is "eke a ful gret enemie to the livelode of the body, for it ne hath no purveaunce ayenst temporal necessitee;" and fourthly, it "is like hem that ben in the peine of helle, because of hir slouthe and of hir hevinesse." That listless, joyless, fruitless, hopeless, restless indolence, more tiring and exacting than the hardest work, more sensitive in its dull fretfulness than any state of bodily suffering,—how apt and terrible a forecast it presents of their fierce sullenness who can come to hate love itself for being what it is! The rest of Chaucer's stern portrayal of "this roten sinne" consists of a long list of all the vices that follow in its train; and a dismal crew they are. "Slouthe, that wol not suffre no hardnesse ne no penance;" and "wanhope, that is, despeir of the

[1] *i.e.* dark, gloomy. [2] *i.e.* peevish, angry. [3] *i.e.* taketh away.

mercy of God." (And "sothly, he that despeireth him is like to the coward champion recreant, that flieth withouten nede. Alas! alas! nedeles is he recreant, and nedeles despeired. Certes, the mercy of God is ever redy to the penitent person, and is above all His werkes.") "Than cometh sompnolence, that is, sluggy slumbring, which maketh a man hevy and dull in body and in soule;" "negligence or rechelessness that recketh of nothing," "whether he do it well or badly;" "idelnesse, that is the yate[1] of all harmes," "the thurrok[2] of all wicked thoughtes;" "*tarditas*, as whan a man is latered, or taryed, or he wol tourne to God (and certes, that is a gret folie);" "lachesse,[3] that is, he that whan he beginneth any good werk, anon he wol forlete it and stint;" "a maner coldnesse, that freseth all the herte of man;" "undevotion, thurgh which a man is so blont that he may neyther rede ne sing in holy Chirche, ne travaile with his hondes in no good werk;" "than wexeth he sluggish and slombry, and sone wol he be wroth, and sone is enclined to hate and to envie;" "than cometh the sinne of worldly sorwe swiche as is cleped *tristitia*, that sleth a man, as sayth Seint Poule."

Such are the main points in Chaucer's wonderful

[1] *i.q.* gate. [2] *i.q.* the hold of a ship. [3] Slackness.

delineation of the subtle, complex sin of accidie. In strength of drawing, in grasp of purpose, in moral earnestness, in vivid and disquieting penetration, it seems to the present writer more remarkable and suggestive than any other treatment of the subject which he has found; or equalled only by the endless significance of that brief passage, where the everlasting misery of those who wilfully and to the end have yielded themselves to the mastery of this sin is told by Dante in the "Inferno."[1]

III. Two voluminous writers concerning accidie at a later date (one in the seventeenth, the other in the eighteenth century) bring into prominence certain points of interest; while, with a great elaboration of detail, they show some loss of power and reality and impressiveness in the general conception: the element of sloth being developed and emphasized somewhat to the overshadowing of all other traits and tendencies.

The curious work entitled "Tuba Sacerdotalis," and published by Marchantius (a pupil of Cornelius à Lapide, and a priest of the Congregation of St. Charles) about the middle of the seventeenth century, sets a high example of consistency in the use of metaphors; for its closely printed folio pages, to the number of 109, are steadily ruled by the one idea

[1] Cf. infra, Sermon I. pp. 51, 52.

of representing the seven deadly sins as the seven walls of Jericho, and showing how they are to be thrown down by the trumpet of the preacher's voice. In the case of each wall, its metaphorical dimensions are carefully described, its height of structure and depth of foundations, its breadth (with the bricks of which it is composed) and its length, or circumference.[1] Then appear the seven trumpets at whose blast it is to fall; seven utterances from the Law, the Sapiential Books, the Prophets, the Gospels, the Epistles, the conscience of man, the judgment of God; and then, with a bold extension of the unbroken metaphor, seven battering-rams are brought forward, in the form of seven effective considerations for the demolition of that particular wall. Lastly, there is in regard to each wall a spiritual application of the curse pronounced in the Book of Joshua upon him who should rebuild Jericho;[2] and a description of the corresponding wall in the sevenfold circuit round Jerusalem. It seems a quaint, cramped plan for saying what one wants to say; though possibly some of our literary methods may have graver faults. But if one finds it hard to understand the mind to which

[1] Each wall is also regarded as being especially under the care of one evil spirit; the wall of accidie being, for some reason, entrusted to Behemoth.

[2] Josh. vi. 26; 1 Kings xvi. 34.

this seemed the best scheme for an ethical treatise, the signs of power and penetration and insight, and the modern-looking passages on which one comes, are surely thereby made the more remarkable. And as, in the nine chapters of his seventh Tractate, Marchantius describes in every detail and dimension the great wall of accidie, so high that it shuts out the light of God, and hides from those whom it encloses all His love and mercy; so deeply founded that it reaches right down to despair;[1] built broad and strong, with diverse kinds of stones and bricks, such as lukewarmness, love of comfort, sleepiness, leisureliness, delay, inconstancy; and drawn out to an immense length by the multitude of hands that toil in building it:—as he expounds all this with a good deal of care, learning, and shrewdness, he says so many things worth thinking of that one may almost forget the pedantic form in which his work is cast. Perhaps the finest passage is that "De Septemplici Ariete Murum Acediæ Evertente," where he dwells on seven thoughts which ought to dislodge this sin from its place in a man's heart: the thought of our Saviour's ceaseless, generous toil for us; of the labours of all His servants, saints, and martyrs; of the unwearied

[1] Cf. the very striking passage on hardness of heart, in the fourth paragraph of the third chapter.

activity of all creation, from the height where, about the throne, the living creatures rest not day and night, down to herbs and plants continually pressing on by an instinctive effort to their proper growth; the thought that came home so vividly to St. Francis Xavier, of the immense energy and enterprise of those who seek the wealth of this world, "in their generation wiser than the children of light;" the thought of the shortness of this life and the urgency of its tasks, because "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave;" the thought of one's own past sins, with the need that they entail; and lastly, the thought of heaven and of hell.

There are some suggestive words in another and a less ambitious work by the same author, his "Resolutiones Quæstionum Pastoralium," where, in dealing with the question, "Of what sort is the sin of accidie?" he indicates a distinction analogous to that drawn by St. Thomas, between its incomplete and complete forms, and says, "His sin is deadly who is gloomy and downcast by the deliberate consent of his will, because he was created for grace, for good deserts, for glory."[1] The words may point, perhaps, to a reason why the conception of "accidie" seems to belong

[1] Marchantii Hortus Pastorum, etc., p. 936 (ed. 1661). Cf. also the "Praxis Catechistica," pp. 1026, 1027.

especially to Christian ethics; why one finds (so far as the present writer is aware) nothing like so full and serious a recognition of the temper it denotes in Theophrastus,[1] for instance, or in Aristotle. The true perversity and wrong-heartedness of gloom and sullen brooding could not be realized until the true joy for which the love of God had made man was disclosed: and the wickedness of a listless, cowardly, despondent indolence might seem less before men fully knew to what they were called by God, and to what height He bade their ventures, efforts, aspirations, rise; before they knew by what means and at what a cost the full power of attainment had been brought within the reach of those who truly seek it. It was the revelation of these things in the faith of Jesus Christ that gave distinctness to the great duty of hopefulness and joy, and corresponding clearness and seriousness to the sin of accidie.

"Exterminium Acediæ" is the title of a volume of addresses for a retreat of three days' duration, published by Francis Neumayr, a Jesuit, in 1755.[2] One

[1] The *μεμψίμοιρος*, or grumbler, who "represents the passive form of discontent," comes nearest to the idea among the Characters of Theophrastus; but the interval of difference is wide and manifold and significant.

[2] The writer is indebted to the Rev. R. W. Randall for the knowledge of this book. Cf. "Retreat Addresses and Meditations," by R. W. Randall, p. xix.

finds here the appearance, at least, of another sort of artificiality; and it is not easy to be reconciled to the elaborate preparation of effects of sudden impulse, somewhat like those

> "In the off-hand discourse
> Which (all nature, no art)
> The Dominican brother, these three weeks,
> Was getting by heart."[1]

But, in spite of touches which may thus jar upon one here and there, the book is certainly impressive and remarkable; and there is teaching in the very fact that the author could choose this one sin to be the central subject of meditation and self-examination throughout the exercises of the three days. His one text, as it were, for all his addresses is that bidding of our Lord's which most directly challenges the desultory, listless, nerveless languor of the "accidious:" "Strive (*contendite*) to enter in at the strait gate:"[2] and he shows how accidie is "the foe of those three adverbs" which should characterize our serving God—*speedily, seriously, steadily*; and how sorrow, love, and fear should help to drive it from our hearts; while he marks how vast a multitude of lives are ruined by the sin, and how few people ever speak of it, or seem conscious of its gravity. But the

[1] R. Browning, "The Englishman in Italy," v. 64.
[2] St. Luke xiii. 24.

freshest and most interesting part of his book is that in which he deals with the excuses of those clergy who "enjoyed bad health," and made some bodily weakness or indisposition the excuse for a great deal of accidie. This excuse is attacked with that sort of downright and inconsiderate good sense which directed the discipline of many English homes half a century ago, and which, while it may often have involved some harshness and suffering, yet surely fought off from very many lives the intractable misery of imagined ailments. Let us listen to the relentlessly healthy Neumayr. "I hear some one complaining, 'I don't mind work. But what am I to do? Again and again, when I should like to work, I can't. I am indisposed.'[1] Now, this objection I must answer with care, because there is scarcely any corner into which accidie as it flees betakes itself with greater security against its pursuers. I ask, therefore, what is the meaning of this pretext, 'I am indisposed'? Do you mean, 'I am not able,' or 'I do not like' to work? If you mean the former, then this abnormal inability must be due to a change that has taken place, either in the solid or in the liquid parts of the body." These two sorts of changes are

[1] "Non sum dispositus." The phrase is, perhaps, intentionally ambiguous. *Vide* Ducange, *s.v. Inel spositus.*

discussed according to the pathology with which Neumayr was acquainted; any damage to the solid parts must be seriously and thoroughly treated, "morboque vacandum esse sana Ratio imperat;"—a disorder of the liquid parts (specified as "humores, sanguis, phlegma, bilis") may be due to any one of many diverse causes; and if it does not yield to change of diet and a good night's sleep, then, says Neumayr, try patience: let the love of the Cross come in; and when the lower nature says, "I'm indisposed," let the generous soul make answer, "Then you must not be."[1] "Truly," he continues in a later passage, "truly the desire of a long life hinders very many from a happy life: for only by toiling can we win a happy life, and they who love life dread toil, lest they may hurt their health. So do we love to be deceived. I, too, myself have hugged like maxims: 'Spare thyself. Take care of thy health.' 'My strength is not the strength of stones, nor is my flesh like brass.' 'A living dog is better than a dead lion.' Bah! who so beguiled me that I did not hear the hissing of the serpent in such words? Who talks like that save accidie itself?" "My Saviour, let my days be few, if only they may be well filled.[2] But

[1] "Exterminium Acediæ," pp. 142, 143 (ed. 1758).

[2] "Pauci sint dies mei, modo pleni sint" (ibid., p. 168).

art not Thou the Lord of life? I pray Thee, then, grant me a long life; but for no other end than this, that I may redeem the time which I have lost by accidie."

Yet one more passage must be quoted from this writer before the witness of the present day is heard —a passage which may be at least suggestive of some disquieting thoughts for many of us. He has been speaking of that call to strenuous co-operation with Divine grace which comes to us because we are human beings; and then of that especial challenge to a vigorous life, a brave self-mastery, which comes to men in the prerogative dignity of their sex. And yet, are men really more brave, more strenuous than women in self-discipline and self-sacrifice? "Certainly the greater part of our teachers favour the opinion that there are more women than men in the way of salvation; and that not so much because many of them show more love than men for a secluded life, nor because they have more time for prayer, and are kept apart from the perilous duties which men have to bear, but because they do violence to their own wishes more than men do; and that is seen in the manly chastity of virgins, in the patience of wives, in the constancy of widows."[1]

[1] "Id quod satis docet *virilis tot virginum continentia, tot uxorum patientia*, tot viduarum constantia" (ibid., p. 210).

Without presuming to follow the speculation that there is in these words as to the hidden things of God, we surely may find something to think about in the reason that is suggested for the writer's venturesome opinion; there is some truth in that thought concerning human life, and the division of its real burdens, which the Jesuit put before his brethren in their retreat a century and a half ago.

IV. Professor Henry Sidgwick, in his "Outlines of the History of Ethics," after saying that the list of the deadly sins "especially represents the moral experience of the monastic life," adds that "in particular the state of moral lassitude and collapse, of discontent with self and the world, which is denoted by 'Acedia,' is easily recognizable as a spiritual disease peculiarly incident to the cloister."[1] The brief description of the predominant elements in the sinful temper of accidie is excellent; but the apparent implication that the noxious growth is indigenous among monks, and rarely found elsewhere, seems disputable, and, for lack of due qualification, likely to be misleading.[2]

[1] H. Sidgwick, "Outlines of the History of Ethics," iii. § 5, *ad fin.*

[2] It is interesting to contrast Mr. Ruskin's emphasis on Dante's juxtaposition of *Anger* and *Sorrow* in the seventh canto of the "Inferno." "There is, perhaps, nothing more notable in this most interesting system" (*i.e.* the system of the seven circles into which the nether world is divided) "than the profound truth couched under the attach-

Doubtless it is true that a special and very virulent form of accidie was often to be found in monasteries, among "such as gave themselves to a one-sidedly contemplative life, without having the power or the calling for it, and who were filled with a disgust of all things, even of existence, while even the highest religious thoughts became empty and meaningless to them."[1] Cassian and St. John Climacus show full consciousness of this; and one may well believe that in the Spanish cloister, into which Mr. Browning got so vivid and terrible a glimpse, a long indulgence of this sin in its worst forms preceded that rancorous

ment of so terrible a penalty to sadness or sorrow. It is true that idleness does not elsewhere appear in the scheme, and is evidently intended to be included in the guilt of sadness by the word 'accidioso;' but the main meaning of the poet is to mark the duty of rejoicing in God, according both to St. Paul's command and Isaiah's promise, 'Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness.' I do not know words that might with more benefit be borne with us, and set in our hearts momentarily against the minor regrets and rebelliousnesses of life, than these simple ones—

'Tristi fummo
Nell' aer dolce, che del sol s' allegra,
Or ci attristiam, nella belletta negra.'

'We once were sad,
In the sweet air, made gladsome by the sun;
Now in these murky settlings are we sad.'" *

[1] H. Martensen, "Christian Ethics (Individual)," Eng. trans., p. 378. Cf. the following page for a careful qualification of that which might seem to be here implied.

* J. Ruskin, "The Stones of Venice," ii. 325 (ed. 1886).

hate which fastened on poor Brother Lawrence, in his intolerable harmlessness and love of gardening.[1] But it would be incautious and, the present writer believes, profoundly and perilously untrue, if any one were to think that the temptation and the sin belong to a bygone age, or need not to be thought about and fought against in the present day, even under such circumstances as may seem to have least of the cloister or of asceticism in them. It may have changed its habit, covered its tonsure, and picked up a new language; but it is the same old sin which centuries ago was wrecking lives that had been dedicated to solitude and to austerity, to prayer and praise; the same that Cassian saw in Egypt, and St. Gregory in Rome—that St. Thomas analysed in one way, and Chaucer in another; the same as that of which Dante marks the sequel in those who have and in those who have not entered on the way of penitence.

Clearly the grounds for such an assertion as this can be but very partially adduced: in large part they must be furnished to each man by his own experience of life and his own conscience.[2] But there are some

[1] R. Browning's "Poetical Works," vi. 26.

[2] There is much that is very clever and suggestive in the chapter upon "Spiritual Idleness," in F. W. Faber's "Growth in Holiness." But, to the present writer's mind, it is a book marred by many blemishes.

fragments of more general and external witness which may be here alleged.

Poetry may not to the legal mind be evidence; and there may not always be a valid inference from the self-disclosure of poets to the character of their age; there may, perhaps, be some who would say that even monks are not more abnormal in their experience than poets.[1] But, nevertheless, it surely is a significant fact that so very many of the chief and most characteristic poets of our age have seemed to speak of a temper very like accidie, as having been at times a besetting peril of their work and life. It is seen in Wordsworth, in the conflict and crisis of his soul, after the shock of the French Revolution, when, he says—

> "I lost
> All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,
> Sick, wearied out with contrarieties,
> Yielded up moral questions in despair.
> This was the crisis of that strong disease,
> This the soul's last and lowest ebb; I drooped,
> Deeming our blessèd reason of least use
> When wanted most."[2]

There are passages in the "Christian Year"[3] and in

[1] Κοῦφον γὰρ χρῆμα ποιητής ἐστι καὶ πτηνὸν καὶ ἱερόν, καὶ οὐ πρότερον οἷός τε ποιεῖν, πρὶν ἂν ἔνθεός τε γένηται καὶ ἔκφρων καὶ ὁ νοῦς μηκέτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνῇ (Plat. Ion., 534, B).

[2] "The Prelude," bk. xi. Cf. Mr. John Morley's Introduction, pp. li, lii.

[3] Third Sunday after Easter.

the "Lyra Innocentium"[1] which could hardly have been written save by one who himself had felt the power, at once penetrating and oppressive, of the moods which are described; but, in two letters to Sir John Coleridge, Keble takes away all doubt upon the subject, and tells very frankly and very touchingly the severity of his struggle against "a certain humour calling itself melancholy; but, I am afraid, more truly entitled proud and fantastic, which I find very often at hand, forbidding me to enjoy the good things, and pursue the generous studies which a kind Providence throws so richly in my way; . . . a certain perverse pleasure, in which, perhaps, you may not conceive how any man should indulge himself, of turning over in my thoughts a huge heap of blessings, to find one or two real or fancied evils (which, after all, are sure to turn out goods) buried among them."[2]—In all the strangely manifold wealth of Archbishop Trench's work, certain of his poems seem to stand apart with a distinctive power for the help of many troubled souls; and some of us, it may be, have to thank him most of all for this—that he had the courage and the

[1] iv. 10, "Ill Temper."

[2] Sir J. D. Coleridge, "Memoir of the Rev. J. Keble," pp. 66, 68. It seems interesting and encouraging to compare with this self-disclosure the witness which others bear to Mr. Keble's "frank, gay humility of soul." Cf. R. W. Church, "The Oxford Movement," p. 23.

charity to let men see not only the songs he wrote when he had won his victory over the besetting gloom, but also those which came out of a time when he hardly knew which way the fight might go—a time

> "Of long and weary days,
> Full of rebellious askings, for what end,
> And by what power, without our own consent,
> Caught in this snare of life we know not how,
> We were placed here, to suffer and to sin,
> To be in misery, and know not why;"

a time in which he knew

> "The dreary sickness of the soul,
> The fear of all bright visions leaving us,
> The sense of emptiness, without the sense
> Of an abiding fulness anywhere;
> When all the generations of mankind,
> With all their purposes, their hopes and fears,
> Seem nothing truer than those wandering shapes
> Cast by a trick of light upon a wall,
> And nothing different from these, except
> In their capacity for suffering."
> "Our own life seemed then
> But as an arrow flying in the dark,
> Without an aim, a most unwelcome gift,
> Which we might not put by."[1]

Mr. Matthew Arnold, in the "Scholar-Gipsy," shows with rare, pathetic beauty how such miseries as these are fastened into the "strange disease of modern

[1] R. C. Trench, Poems: "On leaving Rome." Cf. also "Ode to Sleep," and "Despondency;" and "Letters and Memorials," chapters iii. and vi. An Essay by Mr. Gladstone ("Gleanings of Past Years," vol. ii. p. 101) seems to show that the utmost intensity of such misery was reached by Giacomo Leopardi

life;"[1] and Lord Tennyson, in his fine and thoughtful poem, "The Two Voices," tells the course of that great battle which so many hearts have known, and the strength of that victory which all might win, fighting against "crazy sorrow," against sullen thoughts, until

"The dull and bitter voice was gone."

But surely no poet of the present day, and none perhaps since Dante, has so truly told the inner character of accidie, or touched more skilfully the secret of its sinfulness than Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, in the graceful, noble lines which he has entitled "The Celestial Surgeon"—

"If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain;—
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose Thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in."[2]

"*Sullen were we in the sweet air, that is gladdened by the sun, carrying lazy smoke within our hearts; now*

[1] Cf. also "Growing Old;" a poem which it is interesting to compare with one on "Latter Years," in "Iona and other Verses," by W. Bright.

[2] R. L. Stevenson, "Underwoods," No. xxii.

lie we sullen here in the black mire."[1] Surely the fourteenth and the nineteenth centuries are not very far apart in their understanding of the nature and the misery of accidie. It may have found its way very easily to the cells of anchorets and monks; but it is not very far from many of us, in the stress and luxury and doubt of our day.

One, indeed, there is, and he the one whom many hold to be the greatest poet of our day, who seems to show in all his work no personal knowledge of such cloudy moods as gather round a man in accidie. In reading what Mr. Browning has left us, there is a sense of security somewhat like that with which those who had the happiness of knowing him always looked forward to meeting him, to being greeted by him; a confident expectation of being cheered by the generous and hopeful "geniality of strength."[2] It has been well said that "in this close of our troubled century, the robust health of Robert Browning's mind and body has presented a singular and a most encouraging phenomenon."[3] Whatever may be denied to him or criticized in him, this surely may be claimed without misgiving by those who have learnt from him

[1] Dante, "Inferno," vii. 121–124.
[2] E. Gosse, "Robert Browning: Personalia," p. 82.
[3] Id. ibid., p. 91.

and loved him—that he never failed to make effort seem worth while. To many of our poets we may owe this debt, that they have rebuked despondency and helped us to dispel it: Mr. Browning's beneficence lies in this—that he shows us how a thoughtful man may keep his work untouched by it. It is, indeed, a high standard of courage that he sets before us on the last page he gave us, in the epilogue to his verses, and to his life; but it is a standard by which we need not fear to try his work; for he teaches us in truth as

> "One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break;
> Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
> Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
> Sleep to wake." [1]

V. No words could seem more apt than these to carry us forward to thoughts of that high grace which stands out foremost among the antagonists of accidie; and such thoughts may point towards a further ground for doubting whether some forms of accidie may not even be among the peculiar dangers of the present day.

"Ayenst this horrible sinne of accidie, and the braunches of the same, ther is a vertue that is called *fortitudo* or strength, that is, an affection thurgh which a man despiseth noyous thinges. This vertue enhaun-

[1] R. Browning, "Asolando," p. 157. Cf. "Prospice:" Poetical Works, vii. 168; and also the last two pages of an article on "Robert Browning" in the *Church Quarterly Review* of July, 1890.

seth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth and maketh it feble: for this *fortitudo* may endure with long sufferance the travailles that ben covenable." "Certes this vertue" (in its first kind, which "is cleped magnanimitee, that is to say gret corage") "maketh folk to undertake hard and grevous thinges by hir owen will, wisely and resonably."[1]

"A virtue that is called strength"—the wise and reasonable undertaking of hard things. One sees directly how the excellence of which Chaucer so speaks is indeed the very contrary of that despondent and complaining listlessness, that self-indulgent, unaspiring resignation to one's moral poverty, which is at the heart of accidie. In accidie a man exaggerates the interval and the difficulties which lie between himself and high attainment; he measures the weight of all tasks by his own disinclination for them; his way "is as an hedge of thorns," and with increasing readiness he says, "There is a lion without; I shall be slain in the streets." He teaches his circumstances to answer him according to his reluctance; the real hardness of that which is noble seems in his imagination nearer and nearer to impossibility; with increasing shamelessness he declines the venture which

[1] Chaucer, "The Persones Tale: Remedium Accidiæ." Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, S. Th., 2da 2dæ, Qu. cxxiii., cxxviii., cxxxix, cxl.

is an element in most things that are worth doing, and a condition of all spiritual progress; and so he settles down into a deepening despondency concerning that good to which God calls him, a refusal to aspire, or to venture, or to toil towards a higher life. And from such despondency the more positive traits of accidie are seldom very far removed; resentment, fretfulness, irritation, anger, easily find access to a heart that is refusing to believe in the reasonableness of lofty aims, and lazily contenting itself with a low estimate of its hopes, its powers, and its calling. Plainly that which men are losing, that of which they are falling out of sight, when they sink back into this dangerous and dismal plight, is the grace, the virtue, the sense of duty and of shame, which should lead them to the wise and reasonable undertaking of hard things. They ought to be steadily repelling the temptation to think any fresh thing impossible or indispensable to them. For it is a temptation which comes on apace when once a man has begun to yield it ground; it is a temptation which does more than many which may look uglier to make life fruitless and expensive and unhappy; and it is a temptation which finds useful allies among the characteristic troubles of the present day. Surely it is a time of risk that comes to many men, in the ways of modern life and modern medicine, when

the pressure of their work or the unsteadiness of their nervous system has begun to make them watch their own sensations, and look out too attentively for signals of fatigue. It may even be as harmful to make too much as it is to make too little of such signals; they may, indeed, be well marked and heeded, as warning us that the undertaking of hard things should be wisely and reasonably limited; but there is apt to be a pitiful loss of liberty and worth and joy out of any life in which they come to command an ever-increasing deference, encroaching more and more upon the realm of will, discouraging a man from ventures he might safely make, and filching from him bit by bit that grace of fortitude which is the prophylactic as well as the antidote for accidie.[1]

But there is another way, more serious and more direct, in which the sin of accidie gathers power and opportunity out of the conditions of the present day. The moral influence of any form of unbelief which is largely talked about, reaches far beyond the range of

[1] "Comparez la vie d'un homme asservi à telles imaginations, à celle d'un laboureur se laissant aller aprez son appetit naturel, mesurant les choses au seul sentiment present, sans science et sans prognostique, qui n'a du mal que lorsqu'il l'a; où l'aultre a souvent la pierre en l'ame avant qu'il l'ayt aux reins; comme s'il n'estoit point assez à temps pour souffrir le mal lorsqu'il y sera, il l'anticipe par fantasie, et luy court au devant" ("Essais de Montaigne," ii. 12; vol. iii. p. 128, ed. 1820).

its intellectual appeal; it is felt more widely than it is understood; in many cases it gets at the springs of action without passing through the mind. And this is likely to come about with especial readiness when the prevalent type of unbelief makes little demand for precise knowledge or positive statement, and easily enters into alliance with the general inclination of human nature. The practical effect of agnosticism is favoured by these advantages, and it mixes readily with that pervading atmosphere of life which tells for so much more in the whole course of things than any definite assertion or any formal argument. Hooker noticed long ago that trait of human faultiness which is always ready to befriend suggestions such as those of agnosticism. "The search of knowledge is a thing painful, and the painfulness of knowledge is that which maketh the will so hardly inclinable thereunto. The root hereof, Divine malediction; whereby the instruments being weakened wherewithal the soul (especially in reasoning) doth work, it preferreth rest in ignorance before wearisome labour to know."[1] It is very easy to translate into the sphere of action that renunciation of sustained and venturesome and exacting effort which in the sphere of thought is sometimes called agnosticism;

[1] R. Hooker, "Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity," I. vii. 7.

and so translated it finds many tendencies prepared to help its wide diffusion. If "the search of knowledge is a thing painful," the attainment of holiness does not come quickly or naturally to men as they now are; and it is not strange that while many are denying that it is possible to know God, many more are renouncing the attempt to grow like Him. Two brilliant and thoughtful writers,[1] with equal though diverse opportunities of studying some of the most stirring life of our day, in Boston and in Birmingham, have marked, with impressive coincidence of judgment, how widely spread among us is the doubt whether high moral effort is worth while, or reasonable.[2] "We are so occupied with watching the developments of fatalistic philosophy in its higher and more scientific phases, that I think we often fail to see to what an extent and in what unexpected forms it has found its way into the life of men, and is governing their thoughts about ordinary things. The notion of fixed helplessness, of the impossibility of any strong power of a man over his own life, and, along with this, the mitigation of the thought of responsibility which, beginning with the sublime notion of a man's

[1] Mr. Phillips Brooks and Dr. R. W. Dale.

[2] Like witness is borne from another quarter by M. Raoul Allier, in a book containing much that is vigorous and suggestive, "Les Défaillances de la Volonté au temps présent." (Paris: Fischbacher, 1891.)

being answerable to God, comes down to think of him only as bound to do his duty to society, then descends to consider him as only liable for the harm which he does to himself, and so finally reaches the absolute abandonment of any idea of judgment or accountability whatever,—all this is very much more common than we dream."[1] There is something very terrible and humiliating in the swiftness with which a great deal of energy and aspiration is unstrung the moment even a light wreath of mist passes over the aspect of the truths that held it up. So much less time and reasoning and probability may suffice for the relaxation of a high demand than were required to enforce its recognition. And thus the thinnest rumour of negative teaching seems enough in some cases to take the heart out of a man's struggle against sloth or worldliness. If a considerable number of articles in magazines imply that it is impossible to know God, it does not seem worth while to get up

[1] Phillips Brooks, "Lectures on Preaching," p. 222. Cf. R. W. Dale, "Nine Lectures on Preaching," p. 195: "The issue of the controversy largely depends, for the moment, upon the vigour and authority of conscience, and upon the ardour and vehemence of those moral affections which are the allies of conscience and the strong defenders of her throne. . . . Teach men that it is the prerogative of human nature to force and compel the most adverse circumstances to give new firmness to integrity and new fire to enthusiasm." Cf. also p. 241, for a striking passage on the duty of joy

half an hour earlier in the morning to seek Him before the long day's work begins; if, in various quarters and on various grounds, the claims of Christ are being set aside or disregarded, then, though the arguments against those claims may never have been carefully examined, the standard of the Sermon on the Mount begins to seem more than can be expected of a man; and if it is often hinted that sins which Christianity absolutely and unhesitatingly condemns may be condoned in an ethical system which takes man as it finds him, and recognizes all the facts of human nature, the resolute intention of the will is shaken, and the clear, cherished purpose of a pure and noble life recedes further and further, till it almost seems beyond the possibility of attainment, beyond the range of reasonable ambition. And so there settles down upon the soul a dire form of accidie; the dull refusal of the highest aspiration in the moral life; the acceptance of a view of one's self and of one's powers which once would have appeared intolerably poor, unworthy, and faint-hearted; an acquiescence in discouragement, which reaches the utmost depth of sadness when it ceases to be regretful; a despondency concerning that goodness to which the love of God has called men, and for which His grace can make them strong.

Surely it is true that, amidst all the stir and changefulness which makes our life so vastly different from that of which Cassian, for instance, wrote, there are many whose alacrity, endurance, courage, hopefulness in pressing on towards goodness, in "laying hold on the eternal life," is, insensibly perhaps, relaxed and dulled by causes such as these; whether by the encroachment of imaginary needs upon the rightful territory of a resolute will, or by the suspicion, hardly formulated or recognized, it may be, yet none the less enfeebling, that Christianity has set the aim of moral effort unreasonably high, that men have been struggling towards a goal which they were never meant to think of, and that it is not worth while to try for such a state of heart and mind as the Bible and the saints propose to us. And wherever any such renunciation is being made, there is the beginning of accidie; for that listlessness or despondency concerning the highest life has always been a distinctive note of it. It would be cruelly and obviously unjust to link the sin too closely with such tendencies as have here been indicated. There are very many who go on (not knowing, it may be, by Whose strength they persevere), bravely lifting up the aim and effort of their life high above the reach of doubts which yet they cannot dissipate; there are

very many who, professing full belief of all that can give worth and hope and seriousness to a man's life, yet yield their joyless hearts to sloth or sullenness, as though the love of God had brought no call to strive, no strength for victory, no hope of glory among the trials of this world. All that is here asserted is that there are characteristic troubles of our age which easily fall in with the assailing force of accidie; that the evidence of its persistence does not lie wholly in individual experience; and that it would be unwise to think that we may abate in any way our watchfulness against it.

And now, as ever, over against Accidie rises the great grace of Fortitude; the grace that makes men undertake hard things by their own will wisely and reasonably. There is something in the very name of Fortitude which speaks to the almost indelible love of heroism in men's hearts; but perhaps the truest Fortitude may often be a less heroic, a more tame and business-like affair than we are apt to think. It may be exercised chiefly in doing very little things, whose whole value lies in this, that, if one did not hope in God, one would not do them; in secretly dispelling moods which one would like to show; in saying nothing about one's lesser troubles and vexations; in seeing whether it may not be

best to bear a burden before one tries to see whither one can shift it; in refusing for one's self excuses which one would not refuse for others. These, anyhow, are ways in which a man may every day be strengthening himself in the discipline of Fortitude; and then, if greater things are asked of him, he is not very likely to draw back from them. And while he waits the asking of these greater things, he may be gaining from the love of God a hidden strength and glory such as he himself would least of all suspect; he may be growing in the patience and perseverance of the saints. For most of us the chief temptation to lose heart, the chief demand upon our strength, comes in the monotony of our failures, and in the tedious persistence of prosaic difficulties; it is the distance, not the pace, that tries us. To go on choosing what has but a look of being the more excellent way, pushing on towards a faintly glimmering light, and never doubting the supreme worth of goodness even in its least brilliant fragments,—this is the normal task of many lives; in this men show what they are like. And for this we need a quiet and sober Fortitude, somewhat like that which Botticelli painted, and Mr. Ruskin has described. Let us hear, by way of ending for this essay, his description of her.[1]

[1] J. Ruskin, "Mornings in Florence," iii. 57, 58.

"What is chiefly notable in her is—that you would not, if you had to guess who she was, take her for Fortitude at all. Everybody else's Fortitudes announce themselves clearly and proudly. They have tower-like shields and lion-like helmets, and stand firm astride on their legs, and are confidently ready for all comers.

"But Botticelli's Fortitude is no match, it may be, for any that are coming. Worn, somewhat; and not a little weary, instead of standing ready for all comers, she is sitting, apparently in reverie, her fingers playing restlessly and idly—nay, I think, even nervously—about the hilt of her sword.

"For her battle is not to begin to-day; nor did it begin yesterday. Many a morn and eve have passed since it began—and now—is this to be the ending day of it? And if this—by what manner of end?

"That is what Sandro's Fortitude is thinking, and the playing fingers about the sword-hilt would fain let it fall, if it might be; and yet, how swiftly and gladly will they close on it, when the far-off trumpet blows, which she will hear through all her reverie!"

CHRIST CHURCH,
Christmas, 1890

I.

THE SORROW OF THE WORLD.[1]

"The sorrow of the world worketh death."
2 Cor. vii. 10.

When Dante descends to the Fifth Circle of the Inferno, he finds there a black and loathsome marsh, made by the swarthy waters of the Stygian stream pouring down into it, dreary and turbid, through the cleft which they have worn out for themselves. And there, in the putrid fen, he sees the souls of those whom anger has ruined; and they are smiting and tearing and maiming one another in ceaseless, senseless rage.[2] But there are others there, his master tells him, whom he cannot see, whose sobs make those bubbles that he may mark ever rising to the surface of the pool—others, plunged further into the filthy

[1] It is hoped that this sermon differs widely enough from the preceding essay, both in substance and in treatment, to warrant its insertion here, in spite of the recurrence in it of some thoughts already touched.

[2] "Inferno," vii. 100–116.

swamp. And how do they recall the sin that has thrust them down into that uttermost wretchedness? "Fixed in the slime, they say, '*Gloomy* were we in the sweet air, that is gladdened by the sun, carrying sullen, lazy smoke within our hearts; now lie we *gloomy* here in the black mire.' This hymn they gurgle in their throats, for they cannot speak it in full words."[1]

Surely it is a tremendous and relentless picture of unbroken sullenness—of wilful gloom that has for ever shut out light and love; of that death which the sorrow of the world worketh.

"The sorrow of the world." No discipline or chastening of the soul; no grief that looks towards God, or gropes after His Presence in the mystery of pain; no anguish that even through the darkness—aye, even, it may be, through the passing storms of bitterness and impatience—He can use and sanctify, for the deepening of character, the softening of strength, the growth of light and peace. No, none of these; but a sorrow that is only of this world, that hangs in the low and misty air—a wilful sorrow that men make or cherish for themselves, being, as Shakespeare says, "as sad as night only for wanton-

[1] "Inferno," vii. 121–126; *vide* Mr. Carlyle's translation, almost exactly followed here.

ness."[1] This is, surely, the inner character of "the sorrow of the world." This makes its essential contrast with the sorrow that could be Divine; the sorrow that Christ shared and knows and blesses, the grief with which He was acquainted. This is the sorrow that worketh death; the sorrow that the great poet of the things unseen sets close by anger. Let us try to think about it for a little while.

The sin whose final issue, in those who wholly yield their souls to it, with utter hardness and impenitence, Dante depicts in the passage which I have quoted—the sin whose expiation, in those who can be cleansed from it, he describes in the eighteenth canto of the "Purgatorio"[2]—was known in his day, and had been known through many centuries of human experience, by a name in frequent use and well understood. It was ranged, by writers on Christian ethics, on the same level with such sins as hatred, envy, discord; with pride, anger, and vainglory; it would be recalled in self-examination by any one who was taking pains to amend his life and cleanse his heart; it was known as prominent and cruel among a man's assailants in the spiritual combat. Through all the changeful course of history, nothing, I suppose, has changed so little as the

[1] "King John," IV. i 15. [2] "Purgatorio," xviii. 91–138.

conditions and issues of that combat. And yet now the mention of this sin may sound strange, if not unintelligible, to many of us; so that it seems at first as though it might belong essentially to those bygone days when men watched and fought and prayed so earnestly against it; and there is no one word, I think, which will perfectly express its name in modern English. But we know that the devil has no shrewder trick than to sham dead; and so I venture to believe that it may be worth while to look somewhat more closely at a temptation which seems to be now so much less feared than once it was.

I. The sin of "acedia," or, according to the somewhat misleading form which the word assumed in English, "accidie," had, before Dante's time, received many definitions; and while they agree in the main, their differences in detail show that the evil was felt to be subtle and complex. As one compares the various estimates of the sin, one can mark three main elements which help to make it what it is —elements which can be distinguished, though in experience, I think, they almost always tend to meet and mingle; they are *gloom* and *sloth* and *irritation*. The first and third of the three seem foremost in Dante's thoughts about the doom of accidie; the second comes to the front when he is thinking how

the penitent may be cleansed from it in the intermediate state. Gloom and sloth—a sullen, heavy, dreary mist about the heart, chilling and darkening it, till the least thing may make it fretful and angry; —such was the misery of the "accidiosus." So one Father is quoted as defining the sin to be "fastidium interni boni"—"a distaste for the soul's good;" another calls it "a languid dejection of body and soul about the praiseworthy exercise of virtues;" and another, "a sluggishness of the mind that cares not to set about good works, nor to keep them up."[1] And so, too, in later times, it was said to be "a certain sadness which weighs down the spirit of man in such wise that there is nothing that he likes to do;" or "a sadness of the mind which weighs upon the spirit, so that the person conceives no will towards well-doing, but rather feels it irksome."[2] So Chaucer also, "Accidie or slouth maketh a man hevy, thoughtful, and wrawe. Envie and ire make bitterness in heart, which bitterness is mother of accidie, and benimeth [or taketh away] the love of all goodness: than is accidie the anguish of a trouble heart. . . . Of accidie cometh first that a

[1] Cf. Commentator on Cassian, "De Cœnobiorum Institutis," Lib. x.

[2] Quoted by M. F. Rossetti, "A Shadow of Dante," p 51.

man is annoyed and encumbered for to do any goodness. . . . For accidie loveth no besinesse at all."[1] Lastly, let me cite two writers who speak more fully of the character and signs and outcome of the sin.

The first is Cassian, who naturally has a great deal to say about it. For all the conditions of a hermit's life, the solitude, the sameness, the austerity, the brooding introspection, in which he lived, made it likely and common that this should be his besetting sin; and Cassian had marked it as such during the years he spent among the solitaries of the Egyptian deserts. In that book of his "Institutes" which he devotes to it,[2] he defines it as a weariness or anxiety of heart, a fierce and frequent foe to those who dwell in solitude; and elsewhere he speaks of it as a sin that comes with no external occasion, and often and most bitterly harasses those who live apart from their fellow-men. There is something of humour and something of pathos in the vivid picture which he draws of the hermit who is yielding to accidie: how utterly all charm and reality fade for him out of the life that he has chosen—the life of ceaseless prayer and contemplation of the Divine Beauty; how

[1] Quoted by Mr. Carlyle on "Inferno," vii. 121–126.
[2] Lib. x., "De Spiritu Acediæ."

he hates his lonely cell, and all that he has to do there; how hard, disparaging thoughts of others, who live near him, crowd into his mind; how he idles and grumbles till the dull gloom settles down over heart and mind, and all spiritual energy dies away in him.[1]

It is a curious and truthful-seeming sketch, presenting certain traits which, across all the vast diversity of circumstance, may perhaps claim kindred with temptations such as some of us even now may know.

But of far deeper interest, of surer and wider value, is the treatment of acedia by St. Thomas Aquinas. The very place which it holds in the scheme of his great work reveals at once its true character, the secret of its harmfulness, its essential antagonism to the Christian life, and the means of resisting and conquering it.—"The fruit of the Spirit," wrote St. Paul to the Galatians, "is love, joy, peace." And so Aquinas has been speaking of love, joy, peace, and pity, as the first effects upon the inner life of that *caritas* which is the form, the root, the mother, of all virtues.[2] *Caritas*, that true friendship of man

[1] The description is cited at greater length in the "Introductory Essay."

[2] S. Th. 2^{da} 2^{dae}, xxvii. xxx.

with God; that all-embracing gift which is the fulfilling of the Law; that "one inward principle of life," as it has been called, "adequate in its fulness to meet and embrace the range of duties which externally confront it;"—*caritas*, which is in fact nothing else but "the energy and the representative of the Spirit in our hearts," [1] expands and asserts itself, and makes its power to be known by its fruits of love, joy, peace, and pity in the character of man. Mark, then, how joy springs out at once as the unfailing token of the Holy Spirit's presence, the first sign that He is having His Own way with a man's heart. The joy of the Lord, the joy that is strength, the joy that no man taketh from us, the joy wherewith we joy before God, the abundant joy of faith and hope and love and praise,—this it is that gathers like a radiant, fostering, cheering air around the soul that yields itself to the grace of God, to do His holy, loving Will.—But, over against that joy,[2] different as winter from summer, as night from day, aye, even as death from life, looms the dreary, joyless, thankless, fruitless gloom of sullenness, the sour sorrow of the world, the sin of accidie; the wanton, wilful self-distressing that numbs all love and zeal for good; that sickly, morbid weari-

[1] J. H. Newman, "Lectures on Justification," p. 53.
[2] S. Th. 2^{da} 2^{dae}, XXXV.

ness in which the soul abhors all manner of meat, and is even hard at death's door; that woful lovelessness in which all upward longing fails out of the heart and will—the sin that is opposed to the joy of love. So St. Thomas speaks of accidie, and so he brings it near, surely, to the conscience of many men in every age.

II. Yes, let us put together in thought the traits which meet in the picture of accidie; let us think of it in its contrast with that brightness of spiritual joy which plays around some lives, and makes the nameless, winning beauty of some souls—ay, and even of some faces—and we may recognize it, perhaps, as a cloud that has sometimes lowered near our own lives; as a storm that we have seen sweeping across the sky and hiding the horizon, even though, it may be, by God's grace only the edge of it reached to us—only a few drops fell where we were. Heaviness, gloom, coldness, sullenness, distaste and desultory sloth in work and prayer, joylessness and thanklessness,—do we not know something of the threatenings, at least, of a mood in which these meet? The mood of days on which it seems as though we cannot genuinely laugh, as though we cannot get rid of a dull or acrid tone in our voice; when it seems impossible frankly to "rejoice with them that do rejoice,"

and equally impossible to go freely out in any true, unselfish sympathy with sorrow; days when, as one has said, "everything that everybody does seems inopportune and out of good taste;"[1] days when the things that are true and honest, just and pure, lovely and of good report, seem to have lost all loveliness and glow and charm of hue, and look as dismal as a flat country in the drizzling mist of an east wind; days when we might be cynical if we had a little more energy in us; when all enthusiasm and confidence of hope, all sense of a Divine impulse, flags out of our work; when the schemes which we have begun look stale and poor and unattractive as the scenery of an empty stage by daylight; days when there is nothing that we *like* to do—when, without anything to complain of, nothing stirs so readily in us as complaint. Oh, if we know anything at all of such a mood as this, let us be careful how we think of it, how we deal with it; for perhaps it may not be far from that "sorrow of the world" which, in those who willingly indulge and welcome and invite its presence, "worketh death."

III. It occurs to one at once that this misery of accidie lies on the border-line between the physical and the spiritual life; that if there is something to be

[1] F. W. Faber, "Growth in Holiness," p. 244.

said of it as a sin, there is also something to be said of it as an ailment. It is a truth that was recognized long ago both by Cassian and by St. Thomas Aquinas, who expressly discusses and dismisses this objection against regarding accidie as a sin at all.[1] Undoubtedly physical conditions of temperament and constitution, of weakness, illness, harassing, weariness, overwork, may give at times to such a mood of mind and heart a strange power against us; at times the forces for resistance may seem frail and few. It is a truth which should make us endlessly charitable, endlessly forbearing and considerate and uncritical towards others; but surely it is a truth that we had better be shy of using for ourselves. It will do us no harm to over-estimate the degree in which our own gloom and sullenness are voluntary; it will do us very great harm to get into the way of exaggerating whatever there may be in them that is physical and involuntary. For the border-line over which accidie hovers is, practically, a shifting and uncertain line, and "possunt quia posse videntur" may be true of the powers upon either side of it. We need not bring speculative questions out of their proper place to confuse the distinctness of the practical issue. We have ample warrant, by manifold

[1] S. Th. 2^{da} 2^{dae}, xxxv. 1, ad 2^{um}.

evidence, by clear experience, for being sure for ourselves that the worth and happiness of life depend just on this—that in the strength which God gives, and in the eagerness of His service, the will should ever be extending the range of its dominion, ever refusing to be shut out or overborne, ever restless in defeat, ever pushing on its frontier. Surely it has been the secret of some of the highest, noblest lives that have helped the world, that men have refused to make allowances for themselves; refused to limit their aspiration and effort by the disadvantages with which they started; refused to take the easy tasks which their hindrances might seem to justify, or to draw premature boundaries for the power of their will. As there are some men to whom the things that should have been for their wealth are, indeed, an occasion of falling, so are there others to whom the things that might have been for their hindrance are an occasion of rising; "who going through the vale of misery use it for a well, and the pools are filled with water."—And "they shall go from strength to strength"—in all things more than conquerors through Him Who loveth them; wresting out of the very difficulties of life a more acceptable and glorious sacrifice to lift to Him; welcoming and sanctifying the very hindrances that beset them as the conditions

of that part which they, perhaps, alone can bear in the perfecting of His saints, in the edifying of the body of Christ. And in that day when every man's work shall be made manifest, it may be found, perhaps, that none have done Him better service than some of those who, all through this life, have been His ambassadors in bonds.

IV. Lastly, then, brethren, let me speak very simply of three ways in which we may, God helping us, extend and reinforce the power of our will to shut out and drive away this wasteful gloom, if ever it begins to gather round us; three ways of doing battle against this sin of accidie.

(1) In the first place, it will surely be a help, a help we all may gain, to see more, to think more, to remember and to understand more, of the real, plain, stubborn sufferings that others have to bear; to acquaint ourselves afresh with the real hardships of life, the trials, and anxieties, and privations, and patience of the poor—the unfanciful facts of pain. For "blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble." It is one part of the manifold privilege of a parish priest's life that day by day he has to go among scenes which almost perforce may startle him out of any selfish, wilful sadness:—

"When sorrow all our heart would ask,
We need not shun our daily task,
And hide ourselves for calm;
The herbs we seek to heal our woe
Familiar by our pathway grow,
Our common air is balm."[1]

Of old it was thought to be the work of tragedy that the spectator should be lifted to a higher level, where action and passion are freer and larger, so that he might be ashamed to go home from the contemplation of such sorrows to pity or alarm himself about little troubles of his own.[2] But if the disasters of the stage could teach men to be brave and quiet under trials that were less indeed, but still were real, how much more should that great ceaseless tragedy of actual anguish and distress that day and night goes on around us, rouse and shame us all out of the idle, causeless gloom that sometimes hangs about men's hearts?

Those are very noble words of one who in our day has frankly and faithfully shared with the world his own profound experience both of despondency and of deliverance. "Suffer me not, O Lord, suffer me not to forget how at the very moment when, it may be, I am thus playing with a fantastic grief, it

[1] "Christian Year," First Sunday after Easter.

[2] Cf. Timocles in Meineke's "Poetarum Comicorum Græcorum Fragmenta," p. 613; and Arist. Poetica: vi, ad init.

is actually faring with multitudes of my fellows, many times better and truer and holier than myself. Think, O my soul, of all those—the mourners who have survived everything, even hope itself, the incurables who pace the long halls of pain in the vast hospital of this world; its deposed, discrowned, and disinherited, for whom all the ornament of life has for ever departed, perhaps by their own fault, perhaps by that of others, but in either case gone, and so gone that it never can come back again; long pain the road by which, and death the goal to which, they must travel."[1] Surely the sin of accidie seems most hateful and unmanly in the presence of such thoughts as these.

(2) There is another very safe and simple way of escape when the dull mood begins to gather round one, and that is to turn as promptly and as strenuously as one can to whatever work one can at the moment do. If the energy, the clearness, the power of intention, is flagging in us, if we cannot do our best work, still let us do what we can—for we can always do something; if not high work, then low; if not vivid and spiritual work, then the plain, needful drudgery. Virgil's precept has its place in every way of life, and certainly in the inner life of all men—

[1] R. C. Trench, "Brief Thoughts and Meditations," p. 113.

"Frigidus agricolam si quando continet imber,
Multa, forent quæ mox cœlo properanda sereno,
Maturare datur." [1]

When it is dull and cold and weary weather with us, when the light is hidden, and the mists are thick, and the sleet begins to fall, still we may get on with the work which can be done as well in the dark days as in the bright; work which otherwise will have to be hurried through in the sunshine, taking up its happiest and most fruitful hours. When we seem poorest and least spiritual, when the glow of thankfulness seems to have died quite away, at least we can go on with the comparatively featureless bits of work, the business letters, the mechanism of life, the tasks which may be almost as well done then as ever. And not only, as men have found and said in every age, is the activity itself a safeguard for the time, but also very often, I think, the plainer work is the best way of getting back into the light and warmth that are needed for the higher. Through humbly and simply doing what we can, we retrieve the power of doing what we would. It was excellent advice of Mr. Keble's, "When you find yourself overpowered as it were by melancholy, the best way is to go out, and do something kind to somebody or other." [2]

[1] Virg. Georg. I. 259–261.

[2] "Letters of Spiritual Counsel," p. 6. Cf. an expression quoted in

(3) But there is yet one way, above all other ways, I think, in which we ought to be ever gaining fresh strength and freedom of soul to rise above such moods of gloom and discontent; one means by which we should be ever growing in the steadiness and quiet intensity of the joy of love. It is the serious and resolute consideration of that astounding work of our redemption which the Love of God has wrought at so immense a cost. It is strange indeed—it would be inconceivable if it were not so very common—that a man can look back to Calvary and still be sullen; that he can believe that all that agony was the agony of God the Son, willingly chosen for the Love of sinful men, and still be thankless and despondent. Strange that he should be sullen still, when he believes that that eternal and unwearied Love is waiting, even during the hours of his gloom and hardness—waiting, watching at his dull, silent heart, longing for the change to come; longing just for that turn of the will which may let in again the glad tide of light and joy and health. Strange that any one should be able to think what a little while we have in which to do what little good we may on earth, before the work is all sealed up and put aside for judgment, and yet take God's great

Mr. F. Parnell's "Counsels of Happiness, Usefulness, Goodness," p. 4: "When I dig a man out of trouble, the hole he leaves behind him is the grave in which I bury my own trouble."

trust of life, and wilfully bid the heaven be dark at noon, and wrap himself in an untimely night wherein no man can work. Strange, most strange, that any one should believe that this world is indeed the place where he may begin to train his soul by grace for an everlasting life of love and praise and joy, prepared for him in sheer mercy by Almighty God, and still be sullen. Ah! surely, it can only be that we forget these things; that they are not settled deep enough in our hearts; that in the haste of life we do not think of them, or let them tell upon us. For otherwise we could hardly let our hearts sink down in any wilful, wanton gloom, or lower our eyes from that glory of the western sky which should ever brighten our faces as we press towards God; that glory which our Blessed Lord was crucified to win for us; that glory whither the high grace of God the Holy Ghost has been sent forth to lead us.

II.

LEISURE THOUGHTS.

> "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."
>
> PHIL. iv. 8.

"THINK on these things"—consider these things, and keep the current of your thoughts set towards them: let your minds be busy with them; and let them tell on all your view of life. Such seems to be the force of the word which St. Paul rather strangely uses here.[1] He is giving a rule, I believe, in regard to a part of our life and a field of self-discipline which deserves far more care than it often gets. He does not seem to be speaking of thought with an immediate regard to action, for his advice as to outward conduct is given in the next verse; nor is he speaking here of meditation as a religious exercise, for the lines of thought to which he points would

[1] ταῦτα λογίζεσθε.

seem too wide and general for that. Rather, he is telling us, I think, how we ought to set and train and discipline our minds to use their leisure; how they ought to behave, so to speak, when they are not on special duty, when there is no present task to occupy them. There are spaces day by day in almost every life when the attention is not demanded for any definite object; when we are or may be free to think of what we will. They are the times in which some people are simply listless, and hardly conscious of thinking at all; some build castles in the air; some think of their ambition, or of the scraps of praise that they have heard; some of their anxieties; some of their grievances; some of their dislikes; some, happily, of their hobbies; some, very unhappily, of their health; and some, one must fear, of thoughts that are wholly ruinous and shameful.—It is this "no man's land," this unclaimed, fallow ground that St. Paul would have rescued from its uselessness or misuse; and he points us to the right and wholesome use for it: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

I. Surely it is a matter of greatest moment, a matter

well worth some real pains and firmness with ourselves, if we can indeed so set the ordinary drift and habit of our minds; so form or transform by God's grace their ordinary inclination. Not only because to Him all hearts are open, and from Him no secrets are hid—that would be reason enough—but there is yet more. There is the tremendous power of habit; the constant, silent growth with which it creeps and twines about the soul, until its branches clutch and grip like iron that which seemed so securely stronger than their little tentative beginning. So the mind spoils its servants, till they become its masters; and the leisure time of life may be either a man's garden or his prison.—Thus there is, perhaps, nothing on which the health and happiness and worth of life more largely turn than on this—that the habitual drift, the natural tendency of our unclaimed thought, should be towards high and pure and gladdening things.[1]

And then, yet again, we may learn the importance of our leisure thoughts, if we remember the certainty of our unconscious self-revealing. That inner world of wilful imaginations and of cherished desires is not so wholly hidden from others as we may sometimes fancy. We may believe that we can keep it quite

[1] Οἷα ἂν πολλάκις φαντασθῇς, τοιαύτη σοι ἔσται ἡ διάνοια· βάπτεται γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν φαντασιῶν ἡ ψυχή.—M. Aurelius Antoninus, "Commentarii," V. xvi.

apart from our outward life—that we can huddle it all out of sight when we meet and deal with our fellow-men; but the habits of the mind will quite surely tell, sooner or later, more or less clearly, on those subtle shades of voice and bearing and expression by which, perhaps, men most often and most nearly know one another. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" and not only out of that which at the time a man may choose for utterance:—"his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; and when he goeth abroad, he telleth it." It is a grave and anxious thought, surely, that there is this law of unconscious self-revealing in human life; that, whether we wish it or no, what we are, or what we fain would be and are striving to become, within, will come out somehow, even in this world, forestalling in part that bare and utter disclosure when this world is done with. We have all known, I trust, something of that gracious and unstudied radiance which issues forth from a pure and true and loving character; that air of joy and health which some men seem to bring with them wherever they are; the inevitable self-betrayal of moral beauty, of fair thoughts and hopes within. Must it not be true that (however it may be checked and counteracted by the grace of God, or by the ministry of angels) there is also some

unconscious effluence of gloom, distrust, unkindness, or impurity from the mind that is habitually allowed to drift in its solitude or leisure towards uncomely, or greedy, or suspicious thoughts? The inner habit is always tending to work its way out. "Do not think," wrote a great Bishop of our day, "that what your thoughts dwell upon is of no matter. *Your thoughts are making you.* We are two men, each of us—what is seen, and what is not seen. *But the unseen is the maker of the other.*" [1]

Perhaps I have said more than was needed about the obvious importance of the leisure habits of our minds, their drift and tendency in unclaimed times. But somehow, I think, many do forget how much it matters what they mostly think of when they may be thinking of whatever they choose. And then there are many things that tend to make us listless and careless in the matter. It needs, for some of us at least, a good deal of watchfulness and effort. And the demands that must be met in daily life are many; and we are tired or lazy, and it seems hard if we may not sometimes think of nothing particular. And then, just as many people repeat unkind or foolish

[1] Bishop Steere, "Notes of Sermons," 1st series, p. 273. The writer desires to acknowledge an especial debt to these fresh and thoughtful Notes.

things because they have nothing particular to say, so in many minds the vacant spaces are invaded by thoughts which had better never come, which would not have come if the room had not been empty.

II. So, then, let us go on to see what kind of thoughts St. Paul, taught by the Holy Ghost, Who knows us wholly, through and through, would have us make at home in our minds and hearts.

He gives us a wide choice. The list is by no means limited to what is ordinarily called sacred or religious; it includes all bright and pure and generous thoughts —all that makes up the best grace and helpfulness of life. "Whatsoever things are true:" all that is frank and straightforward and sincere—that has no cowardice, no fear of coming to the light. "Whatsoever things are grave:" not with that sham gravity which so often discredits the word; not with the gravity of self-importance, or narrowness, or gloom; but with a free and noble reverence for ourselves (since God has made us and dwells in us), and for all that is great and reverend around us—the grace of thought that guards us from mere stupid flippancy.[1] "Whatsoever things are righteous:" so that in all our thoughts we may be exactly doing justice to

[1] Cf. Phillips Brooks, "Lectures on Preaching," pp. 54-59.

others; giving them credit for all the good we know or well may hope of them; making allowance for the difficulties we cannot measure; casting out all scornfulness and all suspicion; and using, in all our thoughts of our fellow-men, that generosity which is simple justice. "Whatsoever things are pure:" all that is innocent and safe and guileless; all the simple and spiritual beauty that we can find in nature or in art; all that can stay fearless and unchecked in the presence of the perfect and eternal purity of Christ our Lord: for so may we be growing in that only steadfast strength, the strength of a stainless mind. And then St. Paul yet further widens out the kind of thoughts we are to welcome and habituate in our hearts. "All that is lovable, and all that is attractive:" all that adds to the courtesy and kindliness of life; all that will make good men glad to be with us, and bring a bit of cheering and encouragement, of gentleness and sympathy to anxious or wounded souls; all that rightly wins for us the love of men, and opens out their hearts to us, and makes them trust us with the knowledge of their highest life.

But yet, again, St. Paul has something more to add. He will leave out nothing which can keep our minds astir with harmless, gladdening thoughts;[1] he would

[1] Cf. Bishop Lightfoot, *in loco.*

not slight the virtues or excellences of which men talked even in the heathen society of his day; nay, the mind may well be busy in its leisure about any honourable strength or skill that can win men's praise; the doing well in any worthy and unselfish rivalry—it may be intellectual, or it may be athletic (I think he would have said,)—"If there be any excellence, or if there be any praise, think on these things."

III. Such is the fair and ample list that St. Paul commends to us; such are the things with which he would have us train and occupy our minds. It is, I think, a sphere of self-discipline in which many of us have much to learn; much need of stronger, steadier self-mastery than we have yet attained.

For plainly there is nothing in this world much more worth gaining than the happiness of a mind that tends to dwell on pure and generous thoughts. All through our hours of waking, thoughts of one kind or another must be thronging through our minds; and by God's grace we may do much to determine of what kind they shall be. And all experience would teach us to expect that every year, if we are not careful, it will grow harder to change the habitual bearing, the ingrained likes and dislikes which give tone and direction to our leisure thoughts; we might win

now, perhaps, with a little firmness of self-discipline, that which some few years hence we may have to fight for inch by inch, and may hold only with constant effort and distress. And certainly these mental ways and habits of which the Apostle speaks to us will make the gladness of whatever leisure and loneliness and silence may come in the years of life that may be still before us.—Ah! but there is something more than this—a deeper, higher reason for striving after such self-mastery, for watching over all the habits of our minds. It is a wonderful happiness if we tend instinctively to bright and clear and wholesome thoughts; but yet, I think, St. Paul is here marking out for us only the beginning of that which may be; he is only showing us how to get our minds ready, as it were, for that which God may have in store for us. For it is in pure and bright and kindly lives that the grace of God most surely takes root downward, and bears fruit upward; that the presence of our Lord unfolds the fulness of its power, and achieves its miracles of transforming love. He works unstayed, untroubled, in the soul that has been trained to think in all its leisure times of true and high and gentle thoughts. He enters in and stays there, not as a wayfaring man, but as a willing, welcome Guest in a house that has been prepared and

decked and furnished as He loves to see it. There the surpassing brightness of His presence issues forth unchecked, and there the will of His great love is freely wrought.—Yes, and there too the Voice of God is clearly heard. There is no knowing whither God might call us, if only we would keep our minds, by His help, free and true to hear His bidding when it comes. He may have for any one of us a task, a trust, higher far than we can ask or think; some work for His love's sake amidst the sufferings of this world; some special opportunity of witnessing for Him, or of ministering to our fellow-men, of winning to Him those who know Him not. And on the drift and tone which our minds are now acquiring it may depend whether, when the time comes, we recognize our work or not; whether we press forward with the host of God, or dully fall away, it may be, into the misery of a listless, aimless life.

Oh, then, brethren, for your own sakes, for the sake of your own chief happiness, for the sake of a world that needs your help, for the sake of God, Who seeks your love that He may crown your joy, be trying day by day, with watchfulness and prayer, to gain continually more of this high self-mastery in thought; to set the current of your thinking as St. Paul would have it flow; to turn it right away from

all impurity, suspicion, sullenness, jealousy, self-deception, or ambition, and to guide it wholly towards those pure and bright and thankful ways where it may pass on surely into the peace of God, into the light of His countenance and the welcome of His love.

III.

THE HOPE OF THE BODY.[1]

"Glorify God in your body."

1 Cor. vi. 20.

In this brief command St. Paul sums up the practical outcome of the argument with which he has been occupied. These few words will stick in men's memories; they may tell on thought and action at innumerable points; they fix the true aim in a task that has got miserably tangled and perplexed. And so St. Paul ends with them this division of his letter; for it seems evident that the words which follow them in our version did not form part of the original text.

I. "Glorify God in your body." The demand is closely linked with the thoughts of the foregoing verses; and though it clearly reaches far beyond the subject with which they are especially concerned, it

[1] The writer has repeated and amplified some of the thoughts of this sermon in an essay in "Lux Mundi," on Sacraments.

is in them that we must learn the depth and intensity of its meaning. For it is the positive rule involved in those great truths with which St. Paul has been meeting the sophistry used by some to palliate a most degrading sin.

It is not necessary for us to examine in detail their arguments, or their bold misuse of St. Paul's own language. It is enough at present to follow him as he drags to light the fundamental and fatal error of their position. That error was a shamefully inadequate idea of the human body; of its meaning and purpose and capacity. Men who talked as they did must, plainly and avowedly, be thinking of the body as incapable of anything above the level or beyond the limits of this world; as adapted to find its full occupation and satisfaction among the things of sense; as having neither use, nor hope, nor fellowship in any higher life; as sensitive to no transforming power from above. In their estimate the body itself had no greater importance than such as was indicated by its transient desires and processes of nourishment during this short stage in its development. They thought that its career lay wholly between birth and death, and that the only forces to which it could answer were the ordinary conditions of animal existence; and, with the ruinous confidence of moral

short-sightedness, they made up a corresponding theory as to its proper treatment and occupation. The beginning and the end of the body, they said, all its life and use and receptivity, is here, is sensuous. And so they saw nothing terrible in taking it and imprisoning it here; in surrendering it wholly to earthliness; in shutting out all voices and all light that might have reached it from above, and deeming that in silence and in darkness it might find the fulfilment of its purpose; since it was only meant to grovel and enjoy itself after the fashion of its kindred, with the beasts that perish. So they seemed to think who, in the congenial air of Corinth, were constructing a system of Christian ethics in which sins of impurity should be treated as matters of indifference. And it is against the fatal tyranny of such insolent ignorance that St. Paul displays the truth, in all its liberating strength; the truth which determines the bearing of Christianity on the life of the body. There are, indeed, more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in that philosophy of complacent self-degrading.

"The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body." Decisively, abruptly, universally, all is changed when that is seen. No contrast could be more absolute or more transforming.

At once the full light of Easter flashes out upon the gross darkness of the guilty conscience, blinded and stupefied by the lie that it has begun to love. "The body is . . . for the Lord; and the Lord for the body." In the risen humanity of the Incarnate Son, complete and spiritual, is revealed its ultimate purpose. Through whatever processes of preparation and development it has reached its present condition, yet greater changes lie before it; the meaning of its union with a living spirit, a spirit that can know God, is not yet disclosed. For Christ will change the body of our humiliation so that it shall be conformable to the Body of His glory.

Not, then, for a mere transient purpose of discipline or probation, and far less for a ministry of sensual gratification, do we find ourselves in this world so mysteriously, so inextricably, united with a material frame. There is a deep and wonderful prophecy in that inscrutable interaction of soul and body which may sometimes startle, or bewilder, or distress us; it hints at the hope of the body, the opportunity of the soul; it means that the body also is accessible to the Divine life; that there are avenues by which the power of the Resurrection can invade it; that it is capable of a transfiguration; that for it too the Lord from heaven is a quickening Spirit.

And on that belief rests first of all an astounding hope. For, as St. Paul continues, "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power;" or, as he elsewhere expresses the same truth, "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." The Holy Sepulchre was empty upon Easter Day; the Body which the Word of God had taken in the Virgin's womb had passed on into a new sphere and manner of being; through suffering and death it had been brought to perfection; by a change which could not but be inscrutable to us, it had become a spiritual Body, wholly penetrated and transformed by the unhindered glory of God. And thus in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ had been made known the transforming power that can bring a human body to the state for which the love of God has fashioned and prepared it.—And surely, even if this were all, if men only knew that a frame like their own had been so dealt with, and that the hope of such a change was set before them also, the knowledge might make them reverent and expectant and watchful in the ordering of the bodily life; they could not dare to dishonour or enslave that in whose likeness so great a glory had been once revealed, that for which so transcendent a destiny might be in store.

II. But this is very far from being all; there is something else to be remembered in this matter which is yet more quickening and controlling than the most splendid hope could be. For St. Paul goes on to appeal to two well-known axioms of the Church's teaching, as amplifying and bringing right into the heart of daily life the truth which must dispel the sophistry of his Corinthian antagonist. He need not dwell upon these axioms, he need only just recall them; for they are the primary and characteristic notes of Christian faith and life; they are absolutely essential to the reasonableness of its initial ceremony, and of all its highest acts; so that, if they are forgotten or denied, Christianity loses at once its hold on life, and recedes into the distance, attenuated and impoverished, and dwindling into a mere matter for speculative or poetic treatment. They are the closely united truths of the present fellowship of Christians with the risen humanity of Christ, and of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. "Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?" "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost Which is in you?" These are the present facts in which the higher possibility, the spiritual calling of the body, is made known. Even now Christ leaves not Himself without witness in its life; even here it may receive

the presence, it may yield to the power, of the Spirit by Whom it shall be raised, incorruptible and wholly spiritual, at the last day. There is a continuity, howsoever it may be hindered or threatened, in the perfecting of a human nature; it is wrought by the same Agent and the same Instrument from the beginning to the endless end; from the first stirring of the Holy Spirit's influence to the day when spirit, soul, and body are presented blameless before the throne of God. The change begins on earth: already the body is for the Lord, to be uplifted by His power, informed by His Spirit, possessed and realized in His service; and already the Lord is for the body. In His glory He abideth not alone. He rose again for us. His risen and ascended Manhood, taken wholly into the conditions of spiritual existence, is now the unfettered organ of His eternal life, the free and all-sufficing means whereby He visiteth the earth and blesseth it; whereby, remaining in Himself, He maketh all things new, and in all ages, entering into holy souls, maketh them friends, aye, and children of God. "He rose again for our justification." He has, as one has said, "elevated His material nature to be for evermore the instrument of spiritual action." His risen Body, free and unhindered now at the disposal of the Spirit, is "a

real centre of energy for the transformation of our lives."[1] And it is an energy which, issuing from His complete and perfect Manhood, is borne by the indwelling Spirit to every part of our human nature; here and now beginning that which may hereafter be fulfilled and known; here and now making strange things possible even in the body of our humiliation; hinting at changes which can but be begun on earth; achieving in some the earnest of the future victory; interrupting all that we call natural with fragments of the true nature that as yet we know but dimly and in part; disturbing any narrow and premature completeness with unaccountable traits of "somewhat above capacity of reason, somewhat divine and heavenly, which" reason "with hidden exultation rather surmiseth than conceiveth;"[2] and sending

> "Through all this fleshly dress
> Bright shoots of everlastingness."[3]

Not only is the body for the Lord hereafter—hereafter to be raised to that perfection whither He through suffering has passed before—but here also and already

[1] Cf. R. M. Benson, "The Life beyond the Grave," p. 23; and W. Milligan, "The Resurrection of our Lord," p. 130. To these two books the writer is indebted for much help in regard to the subject of this sermon.

[2] Hooker, I. xi. 4.

[3] H. Vaughan, "Silex Scintillans," p. 34: "The Retreate."

it may be reached, and touched, and cleansed, and quickened by the mysterious energy of His Manhood; it may own the brightness and the dominion of His Presence, as the Holy Spirit dwelling in it reveals its unsuspected capacity of life and freedom, and raises it into closer union with its risen Lord.

III. Such is in part the import of those truths with which St. Paul rebukes the Corinthian apologist for sensuality. He could appeal to them as certain to be in the front of every Christian's mind; as secure of an immediate recognition by any one who bore Christ's Name. Must we not own that, quite apart from anything which is ordinarily called loss of faith, they do not now hold the place which he demands and presumes for them in Christian thought? That our very bodies may be affected by a real energy from the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ, and the communication of His risen Manhood; that the power of His Resurrection may extend even to the physical conditions of our life; that, very slowly and partially, it may be, with limits that are soon reached, and hindrances that will not yield, yet, for all that, very truly and practically, the redemption of our body may be begun on earth; —surely these thoughts are stranger to many of us than they were to St. Paul and to his converts;

stranger than they should be; stranger than they have been to many who were far removed from mysticism and incapable of unreality. For instance, few of us, I venture to think, are quite ready for such words as these of Hooker's, "Doth any man doubt but that from the flesh of Christ our very bodies do receive that life which shall make them glorious at the latter day, and for which they are already accounted parts of His blessed Body? Our corruptible bodies could never live the life they shall live were it not that here they are joined with His Body which is incorruptible, and that His is in ours as a cause of immortality—a cause by removing, through the death and merit of His own flesh, that which hindered the life of ours."[1] I would not try to speak, for I have neither time nor insight, of the hopes which seem to be astir in words and thoughts like these. But I would suggest, brethren, that we should, in careful reverence and humility, be trying to know more and more of this power of the Resurrection in the life of the body. And there are many ways in which we may be watching for its tokens and learning its reality. In the lives of the saints; in their clearness and freedom; their successful resolution not to be brought under the power of the things which

[1] V. lvi. 9.

domineer over most men; their calmness in tumult; their steadiness of judgment through fatigue and suffering; their thankfulness in all things; their self-possession in the face of death. Or, again, in some few careers which have in our own day arrested and controlled men's thoughts by their strange impressiveness; careers in which the intensity of spiritual force appeared in a power of endurance or of command which common opinion instinctively called supernatural; careers such as those of Hannington or Gordon—men born and nurtured in conditions like our own, and yet so splendidly unhindered by the things which keep us back. Or we may turn to the history of ethics; and we are told that "it is a simple historical fact that, among all nations and in all ages, belief in Christ alone has fought and mastered the sins of the flesh."[1]—We must own, indeed, with bitter shame the hideous disfigurement that has prevailed, that still prevails, in nations nominally His; but still there has been a change clear and steady enough to demand attention and explanation. The power of the Resurrection has conquered, and is conquering day by day, passions which made havoc almost unchecked until Christ came.—And then, surely, in the history of art, we find a remarkable

[1] Mr. Wilson, cited by R. L. Ottley, "The Discipline of Self," p. 22.

acknowledgment, conscious or unconscious, that a transforming power has told upon the visible world so as to change men's estimate of art's highest theme Was it not the intense, surpassing interest of those traits and lines and looks in which the work of the Spirit was seen in human faces—faces wasted, it may be, and harassed by the very greatness of the life that was astir, yet wrought even by their pain to a beauty which made all mere physical perfection seem thenceforward cold and poor and dead,—was it not this that drew the artist's gaze away from that which had seemed highest upon earth, to watch for the disclosure of that which was least in the kingdom of heaven, that he might "bring the invisible full into play"; that he might so paint that men should have fresh knowledge of the hidden work of God?[1]

And so, brethren, in connexion with this witness from the history of art, I would venture very tentatively to speak of one more way in which, I think, we might be learning something of the real power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the body. Surely we might trace it sometimes in the faces and in the voices of those who, in penitence and prayer and love, with suffering or long self-discipline, have yielded up their

[1] R. Browning, "Old Pictures at Florence," Poetical Works, vol. vi. pp. 81–85 (ed. 1889).

wills, their lives, to Him—have truly longed that He should have His way with them. The thought is beautifully told in a well-known book on the Resurrection of our Lord.[1] But I cannot help citing a curious and merely incidental expression of it from a very different source. One of the cleverest of modern novels has for its central character a young American artist —Roderick Hudson—brilliant, unprincipled, conceited. He has been living a wholly selfish life in Rome for some time, when his mother and her adopted daughter, Mary Garland, come from America to visit him. And the first time he sees them,—simple, pious, loving folk, who have been living in constant anxiety for his sake,—he turns suddenly to his mother, in the middle of a sentence, and asks abruptly, "What makes you look so odd? What has happened to your face these two years? It has changed its expression." "Your mother has prayed a great deal," said Mary, simply. "Well, it makes a very good face," answers Roderick; "very interesting, very solemn. It has very fine lines in it."[2]—Yes, brethren, there are many faces about this world, I think, in which prayer and patience and humility have, by God's grace, wrought a beauty which may be the

[1] W. Milligan, "The Resurrection of our Lord," Lecture V. p. 190.
[2] Henry James, "Roderick Hudson," vol. ii. pp. 43, 44.

nearest approach that can be seen in this life to the glory of the Resurrection—the glory that is to be revealed in those who shall then be wholly penetrated and transfigured by the Spirit of the Lord.

IV. Such may seem to be some of the ways in which we may mark the real power of the Resurrection in the life of the body. But, after all, by far the best, the surest, the happiest, verification of St. Paul's great claim must be made by each man for himself in the effort of obedience to the bidding of the text; in the hidden discipline of life; through pain and toil and fear, it may be, yet, by the grace of God, not without some earnest of a victory whose faintest, briefest forecast is better than all the pleasures of compromise—the victory of self-possession for the glory of God. It is pitiful to imagine how much of strength and liberty and joy is being missed or marred day after day by the mistakes men make in dealing with their bodies. I am not thinking now of the misery and havoc wrought by sheer misuse—by gluttony and drunkenness and lust. Quite apart, and utterly different from sins like these, there are misunderstandings of the body's meaning, and one-sided ways of treating it, which, with little or no blame perhaps, still hinder grievously the worth and happiness that life might have, and that the love of God

intended for it. There are the two mistakes that Plato has for ever characterized in the third book of the "Republic;" there is the mistake of a narrow and exclusive athleticism, in which excellent means are just spoilt by the lack of an adequate end; and there is the far more serious, expensive, and persistent blunder of the valetudinarian—the exacting worship of a thankless idol, which would probably fare much better if the rich man, like the artisan, had no time to be ill, and thought it not worth while to live *νοσήματι τὸν νοῦν προσέχοντα, τῆς δὲ προκειμένης ἐργασίας ἀμελοῦντα.*"[1] But must we not own that there is also, in much of our Christian thought and teaching, I would not say a mistake, but an omission which has involved some serious loss? On every ground it is right that the lesson of the Cross should come first, and stand ever foremost in the discipline of the Christian life; but is there not room, and need also, for the lesson of the Resurrection? Probably we all of us know well enough why the note of Lent should be ever clear and strong in our lives; but should not the note of Easter too be constant—the note of thankful welcome for that stream of life and light and health which issues

[1] Plato, "Republic," 406 D. Cf. Dorner's "System of Christian Ethics," p. 458, English translation.

from a fount that our sins can never sully, that our prayers and penitence may always reach? We need not be one whit less firm and watchful in self-discipline, less mindful of the war we wage, because we lift our hearts in wondering joy to greet the strength that is made perfect in our weakness—the Presence that can preserve both body and soul unto everlasting life. Suffer me to put into another form what I am trying to express.

On Thursday last I was standing on the hill between Cumnor and North Hinksey, and delighting in one of those effects of contrast which seem the peculiar glory of an April sky. Over all the west and north there loomed an angry storm: black and wild and ominous, with here and there a lurid tinge, it spread from Faringdon almost to Godstow. But constantly, against that sullen mass, the larks were rising into the fresh air, as though they were resolute that no threats or fears should stay their song of praise for spring; and when one turned towards the east, the clouds were light and few, and the distant hills were clear, and the white Cross near Bledlow was gleaming in the sun. May there not be something like that contrast in the inner life—something like that voice of joy even in the face of all that is so dark and threatening; ever some steadiness of light about

the east; ever some radiance of the Resurrection falling on the Cross—the Cross of shame and suffering and conquest? Certainly, when men were most of all in earnest about self-discipline, the joy of the risen life was not weak or uncertain in them. Let us recall some words which may have a peculiar force for us to-day, since he who wrote them has so recently been taken from among us: "Mediæval Christianity is reproached with its gloom and austerities; it assigns the material world, says Heine, to the devil. But yet what a fulness of delight does St. Francis manage to draw from this material world itself, and from its commonest and most universally enjoyed elements—sun, air, earth, water, plants! His hymn expresses a far more candid sense of happiness, even in the material world, than the hymn of Theocritus. It is this which made the fortune of Christianity—its gladness, not its sorrow; not its assigning the spiritual world to Christ and the material world to the devil, but its drawing from the spiritual world a source of joy so abundant that it ran over upon the material world and transfigured it."[1]

V. Many, perhaps, will recognize whose words those are. In Oxford to-day,[2] even one who had not

[1] "Essays in Criticism," p. 207.

[2] Mr. Matthew Arnold died in the week preceding the Sunday on which this sermon was preached.

the distinction and delight of Mr. Matthew Arnold's friendship may be allowed to speak of him, and may be pardoned, I trust, if he speaks unworthily; since it was difficult to be silent. Mr. Arnold has, beyond dispute, enriched the life of our day with such true help as always comes from perfect workmanship. To him we owe a high standard and example of excellence in the critic's work—and this alone were no indifferent gift; for there would be far more reverence and simplicity and charity among men if criticism always were as he would have it be, "a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world." To him we owe the disclosure of a beauty in our language such as only two or three perhaps at most beside him in this age have attained. And this, again, is far more than a mere adornment of human life. A deeper debt is due to those who so advance the ideal of expression; for many hard and foolish and untrue things might be left unsaid if men would only wait till they could say them in good English. Thankfully, too, let us recall how much his delicate and eager sense of beauty, and his faultless happiness of utterance, have added to the pure gladness and refreshment men may find in nature. Surely it is a triumph of poetic power and beneficence to have

linked for ever with our Oxford scenery thoughts almost as exquisite and high as those which Wordsworth found among his nobler hills and vales. But yet we owe to Mr. Arnold even greater debts than these. I should fail, brethren, in the sincerity due alike to his memory and to the trust I hold, if I were to shrink from saying of parts of his work that I believe they make (however utterly against his earnest wish) for the impoverishment of life and for the darkening of light. But there are great truths which it was granted him to bear into the mind of his day with a power and purity perhaps unique. The meanness and vulgarity of self-satisfaction; the absurdity of self-centredness and self-advertisement; the ludicrous littleness of unreality;—it is worth while to have had these things made quite clear and vivid to us by a master's hand. But, as a poet, he has done far more for us than this. With a power of buoyancy which would have made it easy to disguise, or even to forget at times, all grief, he never has kept back from us the sorrow that had come to stay where faith had been—the sorrow which is perhaps the noblest witness that a doubting mind and a pure heart can bear to truth. And he has told (as none, I think, has ever told save he) the depth and solitude and greatness of the buried life—"the mystery of

this heart which beats so wild, so deep in us." And, above all, with his loyal abhorrence of acquiescence in poor and stunted thoughts of life, he has never failed to bid us, one and all, to live with undivided care, with absolute allegiance, by the very highest hope that our hearts descry.—There is light and help for all in teaching such as this; and he whose pure and gracious skill has borne it into many souls has earned, indeed, our reverent and prayerful gratitude.

IV.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT.

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."
2 Cor. iii. 17.

We may almost seem to hear a change in the tone of St. Paul's voice, and to see a new light glisten in his eyes, as, in the course of his letter to the Church at Corinth, he dictates these words to his amanuensis. For they are words of transition into a region and atmosphere of thought very different from that in which he has before been moving. He has been working out, with some complexity and elaboration of detail, the contrast in substance, in circumstance, and in method between the ministry of the old covenant and the ministry of the new; between the transient and fragmentary disclosure of an external Law, and the inner gift of a quickening Spirit, steadfast in the glory of holiness, and endless in its power to renew, to ennoble, to illuminate. With close and tenacious persistence the deep, pervading difference

between the two systems has been traced; and then St. Paul seems to lift up his eyes, and to speak as one for whom the sheer wonder of the sight he sees finds at once the words he needs. He has finished his argumentative comparison; and now the vision of the Christian life, the triumph of God's love and pity in the work of grace, the astonishing goodness that has made such things possible for sinful men, holds his gaze. As the traveller who, in the Alps or the Pyrenees, has climbed the northern side of a pass halts when he reaches the summit, and feasts his sight with the wealth and brightness of the southern landscape, so St. Paul seems here to pause in his discussion, and to forget all else as he looks at the beauty and fruitfulness which God the Holy Ghost achieves in human lives. And as that sight fills his heart, one word rises to his lips (a word that he has not used before in this Epistle): with an insight like that of the poet or the artist who sees into the life of nature and brings out immediately the inner quality of a scene, he seizes on the one distinctive note of the work at which he is looking; one word tells the peculiar glory of the characters that are surrendered to the influence of the indwelling Spirit; one remarkable and penetrating word: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is *liberty*."

Liberty, then, according to St. Paul, is the characteristic token of the Holy Spirit's work in a man's life: he who is really led and strengthened by the Spirit will differ from other men in this especially, that he will have more liberty, that he will move more freely and (in the highest sense of the word) more naturally than they. Let us think this morning of the great claim that is thus made on behalf of that Power which, in its fulness, came to mankind on Whitsunday.—There are two spheres in which we commonly speak of the enjoyment and exercise of liberty—the spheres of thought and of conduct: we speak of free thinkers and of free agents. Let us this morning take St. Paul's claim into the former of these two spheres, and try to see its meaning in regard to our intellectual life.

I. Freedom of thought. We know what are the associated ideas which the expression is apt to raise in most men's minds. It would not be, I suppose, unjust to say that there are some who hold that only by setting aside all that St. Paul meant when he spoke of the Spirit of the Lord, only by getting rid of all the ideas with which he was occupied, can men really attain to liberty of thought; and that the belief in any teaching as divinely revealed is the great, prevailing hindrance to intel-

lectual freedom. It seems sometimes to be quite sincerely taken for granted that, whatever may be lost, freedom, at all events, is gained when a man has renounced the Christian creed. Men speak of having shaken off the fetters of orthodoxy; and some, it may be, who still hold to the historic faith cannot quite resist a secret hankering after the liberty which is thus supposed to belong to those who have ceased to call themselves Christians. There is a wide and often a sincere opinion, not merely that authority in matters of belief has been and is sometimes misused and misunderstood—it would be strange if that were not so, —but that Christianity and thinking freely cannot go together. And yet St. Paul seizes upon liberty as the essential characteristic of the life of faith.

Can so direct a contradiction be in any way accounted for? How is it that different men can look honestly at facts virtually the same and come to conclusions so plainly opposite?

II. Surely, a large part of the answer to that question lies in this—that men have widely different ideas as to what the liberty of the intellect really is. For real freedom of thought is something much more than thinking what one likes; it is something much more difficult and less common. It is easy to say that one has no definite belief, and that

so one is going to speculate freely and to think for one's self. But how hard, how rare, that freedom in thinking for one's self really is! There is, indeed, a certain sense in which none of us might find it difficult to think freely; but it is a sense like that in which we might say that a little child plays freely when its untrained hands fall indiscriminately and with equal satisfaction on any number of discordant notes. There is a certain sense in which it is easy to judge for one's self; but it is a sense like that in which we might say that a man is judging for himself when he saunters in utter indifference past all the noblest pictures in a gallery, and finds nothing to enjoy save some trivial and shallow thing that takes his fancy by appealing to a prejudice or an association of ideas in his own mind. Let the child know something of what music means, let the man begin but to suspect the joy that a true artist finds where the pure and great spirits of past ages speak their thoughts, and then the vision of another freedom comes in sight.—And so in the yet graver exercises of the intellect. The mere liberty of thinking what one likes is not that liberty of which St. Paul speaks—the liberty by which a man is indeed ennobled and realizes himself and serves his generation. There is much to be done,

and much to be undone, in every one of us before he can be free indeed in the sphere of thought

(*a*) To be free from prejudice and conventionality; free from wilfulness and pride; free from despondency and sloth; free from self-interest and the desire of praise; free from our moods and tempers; free from the taint of our old sins, and the shame and misery of those that still beset us; free from all delight in saying clever things; free from the perverting love of originality, or paradox, or theory, or completeness; free from the yet wilder perversions of jealousy, or party strife, or personal dislike; free from the secret influence of timidity or impatience;—are these conditions of the intellect's true liberty easily to be secured? How many of us can say that we are even near to obtaining this freedom?

(*b*) And yet all these conditions, great as they are, are but the beginning of that liberation which sets a man really free to think. For besides all these there must be the watchful discipline of mind and heart; they must be trained to take the true measure of things; to see things as they are; to be sensitive to the faintest glance of light that may betray the hidden truth and mark the place of its emergence; they must be growing in that fineness of spiritual sense which will discern and disengage the living

germ of reality in the complex mass that is thrown before it. The intellect that is to be free indeed must not be cramped, bewildered, hindered, and misdirected by its own deformity; and perfect health and symmetry of mind are not easily to be gained or kept.

(*c*) And yet, again, there is wanted something more than all this. For if intellectual liberty is to be what in some it has been, what it may conceivably hereafter be in us, there is need of something beyond all that can be won even by the most watchful discipline of heart and mind, something more than self-control and justice of insight. For liberty, in the highest sense, cannot be found with the listless, or indifferent, or desultory. The powers that are to grow in freedom must be keen and vivid; their liberty must be realized and deepened and assured in ordered use; they must be ever winning for themselves fresh strength and light as they press along their line of healthful growth towards the highest aim they can surmise. And so there can be no liberty of thought without the love of truth—that quickening and ennobling love which longs for truth, not as the gratification of curiosity, not as the pledge of fame, not as the monument of victory, but rather as that without which the mind can never be at rest, or find

the meaning and the fulness of its own life—a love more like the love of home; a love sustained by forecasts of that which may be fully known hereafter; by fragments which disclose already something of truth's perfect beauty, as its light streams out across the waves and through the night, to guide the intellect in the strength of love and hope to the haven where it would be.

III. It seems strange indeed that people should ever talk as though it were easy to think freely, as though a man could attain to intellectual liberty simply by renouncing his belief in revelation and adopting whatever view of life may seem to him most likely. For it can be but slowly and painfully that any of us may move towards perfect liberty of thought; and we shall never reach it, I suppose, in this world; even as we shall never here be wholly free from sin. But we may grow in freedom if we will; we may be learning how to think; we may be casting out or bringing under sharp control the tendencies that trouble and confuse us; we may be redeeming our intellect from all that enslaves, dishonours, and enfeebles it. And for all this we certainly need help and guidance; we need that some Presence, pure and wise and strong beyond all that is of this world, should bend over us, should come to us, should lead

us out into the light. The truth must make us free. We must learn "the law of liberty," even as, to go back to a former illustration, the child must learn the rules of music before it can begin to gain the true freedom of the trained musician. And it was to make known to us the law of liberty, to write it in our hearts, to make it paramount over the activities alike of intellect and will, that the Holy Spirit came down to dwell in men. Yes; if we would know more of intellectual liberty, let us see whether it is not really to be gained by simply and humbly bringing our lives into more constant and more thankful submission to His guidance, to His enlightening and renewing Presence. For is not this a part of His work? Through the ministry of grace and truth He makes known to men the love of God, shown forth in Jesus Christ our Lord; and as the astounding tenderness and glory of that love begins to dawn upon them, He stirs in them some sense of what might be the joy and strength and peace of a human life that was filled with such a love as that; and then He bears into their hearts the hope that, for Christ's sake, that life, if they will have it, may even yet be theirs. And in proportion as that hope grows real and pure and clear within them, they begin with single-mindedness to look towards God and to live as in His sight;

and so the things of this world—its praise, its prizes, its contentions, its prejudices—loose their hold upon the mind, and a new sense of strength and independence come to it, as it begins to see even afar off its rest for ever in the truth of God. And then the Holy Spirit shows the way of liberty and growth: for there has been one human life lived upon this earth in perfect freedom; one life in which every faculty was at every moment wholly free; and in proportion as a man is growing in likeness to our Lord Jesus Christ and following the blessed steps of His most holy life he will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. For there is the royal law of liberty; there is the way where mind and heart alike may be becoming free indeed. And then as men falter and grow weary in the way, or as sin besets and overclouds them, He brings pardon and renewal; He makes possible those "fresh beginnings, which are the life of perseverance;" He refreshes soul and body with the communion of their Redeemer's Manhood. Yes, and even in this world men find it true that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"—there the intellect really does attain to a steadiness of insight, a quiet decision, a strength against perplexity and sophistry, a firmness of right choice, which sometimes stand in strange contrast with the vacillation and mistakes of natural

ability; and there are those in every rank of life on every level of education, who have in this way reached a degree of intellectual liberty such as the cleverest of men might envy if he was wise enough to recognize it. The true *liberty* begins in this world; but it is only when the Spirit of the Lord has perfected the work of grace that the full meaning of that great word can be disclosed; and when men are sinless, when they see God, when they know Him as also they are known, and when they serve Him day and night, then at last they may understand what it is for the intellect to be free indeed.

V.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

"Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

1 Cor. xiii. 12.

THERE is in these words another contrast besides that which we see at once, between partial knowledge and complete. It is not only that the field of knowledge is to be extended; there is to be a change also in the act itself—a change in what knowing means, in the relation it expresses. For there is between the verbs used in the two clauses a difference which our translators have wisely despaired of reproducing. Yet the distinction was, I think, full of significance to St. Paul; it rests on a clear conviction in his mind about the attainment of knowledge concerning the things of faith; and it may have some especial teaching for us, in times when many are rejecting Christianity because it does not satisfy expectations which it has expressly and steadily discouraged.

I. The two verbs, then, are γιγνώσκειν and ἐπιγιγνώσκειν: but it is in the corresponding substantives, γνῶσις and ἐπίγνωσις, that the difference is most clearly and suggestively marked both by St. Paul and by St. Peter. And in regard to the latter word a careful and unenthusiastic critic has said, on the Second Epistle of St. Peter, that "this ἐπίγνωσις is the central point of the Christian life, both theoretically and practically considered."[1]

What, then, is the meaning of the word? What is the distinction by which it goes beyond the simpler word γνῶσις? It seems, in the use of it which we are here considering, to mark a higher degree of intensity, an energy of deeper penetration. It is not a quiescent state, the resting in an acquirement, but the advance of one to whom every attainment is but the impulse of fresh effort; one who is not content to know, but ever, in Hosea's words, "follows on to know"—"knowing in order to follow, and following in order to know; as light prepares the way for love, and love opens the mind for new light."[2] It

[1] "It is the vehicle of the Divine agency in us, and so of our highest participation of God; it is the means of escape from the pollutions of the world—the crowning point of Christian virtues; the means of access into Christ's kingdom" (Alford's Commentary, vol. iv part i. "Prolegg.," p. 141).

[2] Cf. E B. Pusey on Hos vi. 3.

seems analogous to that which many of us may have experienced, the strong intention with which one looks into a great picture; at first, perhaps, with some surprise at the high language that has been used about it; but gradually, hour after hour, it may be, seeing in it depths beyond depths of thought and beauty; never turning away from it without a feeling that we were, perhaps, on the very verge of seeing something unsuspected hitherto; leaving it at last with a certainty that we have by no means exhausted all that it contains.

Analogous again, and more closely analogous, is that advancing knowledge which we may gain, if we are patient and reverent, of a really great and deep character. As we watch the ways and try to enter into the mind of one who, through the dutiful effort of a long life, has done justly, and loved mercy, and walked humbly with his God, there may seem no end to the depths of strength and beauty which are disclosed; we are always feeling how little we have really known, how much there is yet to be understood. It was a surprise to us, perhaps, when first we penetrated at all beyond the reserve which has guarded the inner wealth from the squandering of common talk; but beyond that first surprise we see by fragments, and by indications slowly recog-

nized, how far more complex and costly and mysterious a thing real moral greatness is than we had ever thought. Knowing, we follow on to know; and as we advance, fresh revelations are released where we had suspected nothing.

II. Such, in regard to the things of faith, is that "larger and more thorough knowledge," that more penetrating discernment, which ἐπίγνωσις seems to mean. And thus it is striking to mark at what point in his life St. Paul brings the word into frequent use in speaking of the knowledge of God. It is seldom so used in his earlier letters; but it comes into sudden prominence in those written while he was for the first time a prisoner at Rome. It is a frequent and emphatic word with him as he writes from his imprisonment; and surely we may make a fair conjecture as to the cause. A lull has come in the outward activity of his life; that restless energy is checked from its manifold and ceaseless tasks; there is no longer the same necessity to be continually entering into the minds of others and becoming all things to all men; he has got an opportunity such as illness sometimes brings; to a certain extent he is bidden to come apart and rest awhile. And in that comparative quietude he sees with deeper, steadier insight how boundless is the space of ever-growing light

through which the soul of man may move forward in the knowledge of God; he sees how in that knowledge, rightly understood, there is the highest exercise for every faculty of the inner life—for mind and heart and will, to learn, to love, to worship; how through that knowledge a man may come to realize himself, to know the end for which God called him into being, and what it means so to lose one's life that one may find it. He sees further into that all-embracing truth—that this is life eternal, the true life, the life for which the love of God created and redeemed men, that they may know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom He has sent; knowing Him with a knowledge that ever presses on, and that can never be distinct from love. Surely it may be with some such experience of progress in the knowledge of God that St. Paul, in every letter which he writes from his imprisonment, makes it a part of his entreaty for his converts that they too may be led forward in that deepening knowledge; that God may give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; that their love may abound yet more and more in knowledge; that they may increase in the knowledge of God and of His will; that their deeds of charity may become effective in the knowledge of every good thing. "In all the

Epistles of the Roman captivity," says Bishop Lightfoot, "St. Paul's prayer for his correspondents culminates in this word."[1] Above all else he longs that they may continually advance in that knowledge which has been the especial blessing, the uplifting gladness of his time of bondage.

III. Our knowledge of God, then, in this life, must be a constant "moving forward in the twilight;" fragmentary, and perhaps unequal; but by His grace increasing, as we "follow on to know;" starting from a venture, demanding an effort; and to the end of this life a knowledge only in part. But after this life, if we have endured and persevered unto the end, there shall be a change. "Then shall I know even as also I was known." When the things which keep us back have loosed their hold on us; when sin and indolence and doubt are done with; when all the anxieties that we have suffered here to fret us and divide our hearts are put away for ever; when, through whatsoever discipline, in this world or beyond it, God has wrought His perfect work on us; then will the broken and faltering effort pass into an unhindered energy, and we shall know Him even as also we were known. Even as from the first He has

[1] Bishop Lightfoot, on Philemon 6. Cf. also his notes on Phil. i. 9, and on Col. i. 9.

known us; as, when He made us His, when He called us to Himself, when He gave us our work to do, He knew us; as now, in all the discipline of life, in all His dealings with us, His gaze penetrates at once the inmost depths of our being; so shall we be ever moving forward, with intensity then undivided and unwearied, in the realization of His infinite truth and goodness.

Let us try to see our present duty in this regard. Some measure of the knowledge of God is within the reach of all who really desire it and will really strive for it.[1] Through many ways He is waiting to reveal Himself more clearly to every one of us—through conscience, through nature, through the Bible, through the lives of the poor and of those who suffer patiently, through all moral beauty, and above all, in the life and teaching of our Lord. Through all these ways, it may be, hints and glances of His glory have already come to us; through all these ways we may know in part, and follow on to know continually more. But, undoubtedly, there is need of venture—the venture of faith, to commit ourselves to Him; to trust the light we see, even though we see it faintly and unsteadily. Knowledge will never grow in that cold and sceptical mind

[1] Cf. Bishop Harvey Goodwin, "The Foundations of the Creed," p. 30

which Dr. Newman has described so well; the mind "which has no desire to approach its God, but sits at home waiting for the fearful clearness of His visible coming, Whom it might seek and find in due measure amid the twilight of the present world."[1]—And then, with the venture of faith, there is need of self-discipline and of effort. We cannot expect to grow in the knowledge of God while our sins are unrepented of; while our temper is uncontrolled; while purposes of self-indulgence, half recognized and connived at, are suffered to hang about our cowardly and lazy hearts—no, nor yet while our prayers are hurried and heedless; while devotion is costing us no care and no firmness of daily self-concentration. And then, above all, there is need of loyal obedience to the truth we have already grasped; a resolute determination, "by God's grace, not to flinch from any duty" we have recognized;[2] to follow where the way is clear, even though it be rough and steep, and though at first we see but a few steps in front of us. These are plain conditions of growing in the knowledge of God; and they can never be easy to any of us; they may at first be very hard. But when we are quiet,

[1] "University Sermons," p. 220.

[2] Cf. Wilfrid Ward, "William George Ward and the Oxford Movement," Appendix B

when we are true to ourselves, we know, thank God, one thing, at all events, quite certainly—that in that way of effort and self-discipline and prayer lies our only hope of peace; our one chance of living as every man would fain have lived when the time comes for him to die. Far ahead of us, it may be, on that way we see some who have had faith to venture and strength to persevere; we see what they, God helping them, have made of life and of themselves; we feel how they have grown in the knowledge and the love of God, and how that knowledge and that love have lifted them above the passions and the fears, the selfishness and insincerity, which make so many weak and miserable; and so we may gather courage to press on; while God, of His great mercy, seldom leaves men long without some earnest of that increase of light which ever waits upon the pathway of obedience; that they may understand more clearly, as they will to do His Will, what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of His glory, and the exceeding greatness of His power.

VI.

DRUDGERY AND HEROISM.

"I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."

ST. JOHN vi. 38.

I. IN almost every calling of life we can trace two very different elements or parts. There is, on the one hand, the ordinary routine of daily work; there is, on the other hand, the occasional demand for a great act of courage or self-sacrifice. On the one hand, the level course of common tasks; on the other, the rare opportunity of heroism. On the one hand, the plain business that must be done; on the other, the chance of realizing, of acting up to the noble idea which belongs to one's profession. So it is, for instance, in a doctor's life. He may go on, through week after week, of clear and obvious tasks, just doing his best for the cases that he has to deal with; and then, suddenly, it may be, he has a chance of doing, or not doing, a splendid deed; of saving another's life at the risk of his own; of showing how

far the highest thought of his calling has a hold upon him. And so, again, in a priest's life. There may be long spells of quiet and safe and almost uneventful work; and then comes the call to a real venture of self-sacrifice—the opportunity, it may be, of bearing part in some perilous mission-work; the outbreak of fever or cholera in the squalid alleys of a crowded parish; the choice between worldly prospects and loyalty to Divine truth: and he, too, must show what he really means, of what sort he really is, and how far the Gospel he preaches and the example of his Lord have indeed been taken into his own heart. And so it is, most evidently, I suppose, in a soldier's life:[1] there especially one may seem to see these two elements—the ordinary routine and the magnificent opportunities, the commonplace business and the heroic ventures. It must be so throughout all ranks. Every soldier, to whatever branch of the service he belongs, and whatever trust he holds in it, will have his share of plain and unexciting work, of tasks that may look more or less like drudgery; and then to every soldier there may come the opportunity of realizing at some critical moment,

[1] This sermon was preached on the 18th of June, in St. Paul's Cathedral, at the Annual Festival of the Army Guild of the Holy Standard.

in some decisive act, the highest ideal of greatness; the opportunity of laying down his life for his friends; of lifting higher the standard of courage, of endurance, of self-control, and of self-sacrifice, by swift and generous daring—by a deed to be remembered and reverenced, perhaps, on earth through many generations; a deed never to be forgotten, surely, there, where the memory of a man's unselfishness matters most.—The riches of a nation are the records of such acts—acts that long live on to shame men out of listlessness and vanity, and to make them discontent with easy, selfish lives and paltry aims; acts which, by the grace of God, ennoble every way of life, however humble and obscure; but which nowhere glow with a more vivid radiance than in the histories of military service. So absorbing is men's interest in such exploits, that they often give hardly any thought to the uneventful background out of which they come; to the long tracts of quiet routine which may be just as real and characteristic a part of a true soldier's life as the brilliant ventures of fearlessness and self-devotion.

Now, if there are these two parts in our lives, surely what we want to learn is how we may best be preparing ourselves, as we go on with our regular and ordinary work, for the demand, the

opportunity, which may come to us; how we may be getting ready to do the right thing, and to quit ourselves like men, when the crisis, the time of trial, is on us. For two things, I think, we may mark if we study men's characters and ways a little. First, that the ready and the unready man, the man who will not fail and the man who may, look very much alike sometimes. The difference is deep down in them, and it does not show in fair weather; it is the sudden demand, the need for something great, that brings it out—just as it was not till the cry came at midnight, when it was too late to mend matters, that the foolish virgins found that they had no oil for their flickering and failing lamps. And secondly, most men are likely to be at a crisis more or less what they have been beforehand. Where their treasure is, there will their heart be found; they will make their choice then—save for a miracle of God's grace—as they have been choosing all along. It seems, indeed, one of the gravest and deepest of moral laws, that under the stress of trial men will strongly tend at least to be whatever in quieter hours they have made themselves.

II. Is there, then, any one great principle, any universal law, which reaches over the whole course of a man's life; which holds good alike in all its parts, and under all conditions? Is there any one ruling motive

which we can so welcome and settle and enthrone in our hearts by daily practice, that in the time of fiercest strain it may, God helping us, hold us firm and keep us straight? Can we make routine the school of heroism?

Yes, indeed, my brothers; and in this, as in all else, our Blessed Lord and Saviour teaches us quite plainly and quite perfectly the way of peace and strength. He Who died to set us free to live as men should live; He Who ever lives to plead for us; He Who deigns to come to us in the holy Mysteries which He has ordained;—He shows us by His own example how a life may be sure and steadfast through all the changes of this world; how the plainest tasks may be our training for the very noblest deeds. "Not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." In those words He tells us the central principle of His own life on earth; and in those words He gives us the one sure rule for handling our own lives rightly. Other aims may call out a high degree of energy and ability in a man; the passion for glory, the love of money, personal ambition, thirst for power,—all these will nerve a man for great enterprises, great endurance; high things have been dared and done for motives such as these; but none of these is sufficient even for this present life; none will

guide a man with equal, steady light and help alike through the calm and through the storm, through the quiet and through the exciting times. Men spend their strength for these things; they gain it in allegiance to God. "Not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." To ask myself each morning, not—How far can I to-day advance my own interest, increase my reputation, enjoy myself? but—How can I, in the duties and opportunities of this day, fulfil the will of God?—this is the way in which a man grows strong and fearless; this is the way in which the plainest round of daily tasks may be his training-ground for some splendid act of self-devotion that will thrill and gladden and uphold the hearts of all true men. "Not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." Only let a man—whatsoever his work may be—renew each day that purpose in his heart, and seek God's grace to keep it, and then, be sure of it, two things will come about. First, that for him even the most ordinary tasks, the mere routine of life, will be ennobled; the very drudgery will shine with some reflection of the obedience of heaven; it will seem like those most attractive of all faces, in which there may be no natural beauty, in the usual sense of the word, which may be even plain, but in which there certainly is a supernatural

charm of moral beauty that we may learn a little to understand as life goes on. And secondly, in that routine he will be bringing his inner life into a habit of attention and allegiance to the voice of duty; by constant drilling and discipline he will be training his heart almost to take it for granted that at all times duty is the one thing to be thought about, and that whatever clashes with duty must give way; and so, whenever the time comes, he will be ready. If the voice of duty, clear, austere, yet not ungentle, calls even for the sacrifice of life itself, he will not be perplexed or staggered; he will not have to weigh this and that, or to call in the straggling forces of his will; that is certainly the voice that he has always followed; he will rise and follow it now; it has kept him straight so far, and he will not now begin to distrust it; he will answer, in simplicity and thankfulness, "I come to do Thy will; I am content to do it; yea, Thy Law is within my heart;" he will keep the path of duty, and will leave the rest to God. Yes, the love of duty is the strength of heroes; and there is no way of life in which we may not set ourselves to learn that love.

III. Let me point you, brethren, in conclusion, to two splendid instances of the controlling greatness of character which may be reached by that steadfast

and unselfish loyalty to duty of which I have been trying to speak. We cannot forget what night it is on which we are gathered here—the night of Waterloo. We are within a few minutes of the very time at which the battle was decided; the time at which, as the imperial guard passed up the ridge held by our troops, the Duke of Wellington gave orders for that simultaneous attack in front and in flank to which Napoleon himself ascribed the loss of the battle.[1] As we look back to that day—the most critical and the most fateful, I suppose, in modern history—perhaps the best lesson for us all to learn may be seen when the two great commanders who met upon that field are set in contrast; and the lesson of that contrast is, I think, nothing else than this—the unique strength and greatness of allegiance to duty. On both sides of the contrast we may see in rare magnificence the same commanding qualities of intellect, the same unwearied energy, the same personal courage, the same masterful intensity of will; but, writes the historian, "Napoleon was covetous of glory; Wellington was impressed with duty." "Singleness of heart was the characteristic of Wellington, a sense of duty was his ruling principle; ambition pervaded Napoleon, a thirst for glory was his in-

[1] Alison, ch. xciv., § 30, and note.

variable incentive. . . . There is not a proclamation of Napoleon to his soldiers in which glory is not mentioned, nor one in which duty is alluded to; there is not an order of Wellington to his troops in which duty is not inculcated, nor one in which glory is mentioned."[1] It would be hard, I think, to measure what Europe owed to the victory at Waterloo; but surely this stands high, if not supreme, among its abiding results—that the splendour of that day arrays the form of duty; that it arrested and struck down a policy of personal ambition.

Let us turn for our last lesson to a very different scene, but yet a scene in which the majesty of dutifulness held the gaze of Europe. As on this very day last year, one whom I would venture to call one of the greatest soldiers of our age was carried to his grave. The Emperor Frederick had given up his heart to the love of duty in his boyhood; through his years of splendid action he had been steadfast and true in that allegiance; and through the long weeks of yet more splendid patience God Almighty kept him dutiful to the very end. Forty years ago, before he was eighteen, he had entered upon active service; and his father introduced him to the officers of the regiment to which he was attached, in these

[1] Alison, ch. xciv., § 64–66.

words: "I entrust my son to you in the hope that he will learn obedience, and so some day know how to command." Then, turning to his son, he simply said, "Now go and do your duty." The note that these words touched sounded again in the first public utterance of the youthful prince about six months later: "I am still very young," he said, "but I will prepare myself with love and devotion for my high calling, and endeavour some day to fulfil the anticipations of my people, which will then become a duty entrusted to me by God."[1] And so year after year, through times of peace and times of war, he laboured to prepare himself; in steadfast allegiance to duty he kept storing up the strength and wisdom and self-mastery that he would need when he should be called to his yet greater duties as the Emperor of Germany. But God had another—may we not, as we look towards the Cross of Christ, be bold to say an even greater?—use for all that strength and wisdom and self-mastery. Not to sway for a few years the course of that one nation's history, but for all times and through all lands to set a great example of unmurmuring patience; to teach and to encourage men to do their duty, simply and quietly, even through the weariest days of suffering and weakness;

[1] Rennell Rodd, "Frederick, Crown Prince and Emperor," pp. 35, 36

to show how the love of home and duty may go unfaltering, not with a sudden venture but with slow and painful steps, through ever-growing anguish, on into the very face of death;—this was the privilege of the most dutiful soldier whose greatness has ennobled our day. Thus did men see in "the short and speechless reign" of the Emperor Frederick how vast a strength is stored in those whose hearts are resolutely set not to do their own will, but the will of Him Who sent them.

VII.

THE PERILS OF THE VACANT HEART.

> "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."
>
> St. Matt. xii. 43–45.

I. These strange, disquieting words seem to come into the course of our Lord's teaching with the tone, the feeling, the climate, as it were, of another world than that with which, at the moment, He is engaged. As He speaks, His disciples are round about Him; His opponents are cavilling at His words and works, and trying to lead Him to a false step; the man whom He has just healed is sitting, it may be, at His feet and looking up into His face, in the first rapture of recovered health; and the multitude are pressing in on the little group. But He Who is the Centre of all this interest and hatred and affection, is not

looking at any of the people who surround Him; His gaze does not meet with theirs; for His eyes are fastened upon a scene beyond the visible, and none of those who are about Him have any suspicion of the tragedy which He is watching. He is marking the course of a great disaster in that hidden and mysterious world which lies behind the things of sense, behind the ways of men; and suddenly, in words at once most vivid and most mysterious, He tells His hearers what it is that He is seeing. What is it that He speaks of? What is it that He is watching?—It is the dreary, wasteful, ruinous disappointment that comes wherever a moral victory is left unused. First, He sees the unclean spirit—some tyrannous power of darkness and defilement—driven out of a man's heart, driven from the throne it had usurped; He sees the heart relieved of that vile presence, of that cruel oppression. And then He marks how the evil spirit, hateful and hating—the spirit that has been driven out—goes restlessly straying to and fro, in the dreary impotence of baffled cruelty. At last He sees it turn again to the heart whence it had been dislodged; and, lo! that heart is empty. It is like a place that is decent indeed, and orderly enough; no great harm has come as yet, no shameful sin defiled it; it looks neatly swept and garnished:

but it is empty. No ruling principle or passion has come to occupy it; no strong affection, no controlling love, no masterful enthusiasm, has been welcomed as sovereign over the man's life, and lord of his allegiance: the great opportunity, the critical moment of liberty, has been missed, and the throne is vacant. "Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and," our Lord adds, in words which sound like the dreariest death-knell that ever rang over a wasted life, words so desperately sad that, however a man may be living, he could hardly bear to imagine them spoken of himself,[1] "the last state of that man is worse than the first."

II. Mysterious and astounding the scenery of this pitiful drama may seem to us; we may feel that it is like a fragment of a world which lies, save in so far as our Lord reveals it, quite beyond our ken. But however weird and dark the story of that wasted opportunity, that unused and therefore forfeited victory, may seem to us, we may feel that it tells of a disaster which we can clearly understand; that it points to a very plain law of human life and character. For we know that in the moral, as in the

[1] Cf J. B. Mozley, "Parochial and Occasional Sermons:" *Growing Worse*, pp. 118–120.

physical order, nature abhors a vacancy. Consciously or unconsciously, as the years go by, all men more and more submit their lives to some allegiance; with whatever uncertainty and changefulness, some one motive, or group of motives, grows stronger and stronger in them; they tend, at least, to bring every thought into captivity to some one obedience. For better or for worse, things which seemed difficult or impossible a few years ago will come almost naturally to a man a few years hence; he will have got accustomed to take a certain course, to obey certain impulses or principles wherever they appear. We may indeed distinguish three states in which a man may be. He may be yielding his heart more and more to the love of self, in whatsoever way of pride, or avarice, or lust, or sloth. Or he may be yielding his heart more and more to the love of God, falteringly, it may be, with many struggles and failures, but still really getting to love God more, to move more readily and more loyally to do God's Will wherever he sees it. Or, thirdly, he may be like the man of whom our Lord spoke. He may, by God's grace, have cast out an evil spirit from his heart; he may have broken away from the mastery of some bad passion, some tyrannous hunger or hatred; and he may be hesitating, keeping his heart swept, clear and empty; his

will may be poised, as it were, between the one love and the other. Ah! but that can only be for a very little while. That balance never lasts; one way or the other the will must incline; one service or the other must be chosen, and that soon.[1]

For no man is ever safe against the love, the service of sin save by the power of the love of God. There is no sure way of keeping the evil out save by letting Him in—by the glad welcome, the trembling, thankful, adoring recognition of Him Who made us, that we might find our freedom in His service, and our rest in His engrossing love. Yes, for here is the deepest pathos of that empty throne of which our Saviour speaks — that heart so easily reoccupied by the unclean spirit that has been driven out of it:—that all the while Almighty God is waiting, pleading that He may enter in and dwell there; that he may bring into the wavering and aimless soul that growing peace and harmony and strength which no man knows save in the dedication of his life to God. God, and "the seven Spirits which are before His throne," would enter in and dwell there; and then the last state of that man might be in the beauty of holiness, in the joy of his Lord, in the peace that passeth

[1] Cf. Bishop Steere, "Notes of Sermons," second series, p. 95; and H. Drummond, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," pp. 100, 101

all understanding. Surely, brethren, it is pitiful to think how many lives are passed in perpetual peril and hesitation; how many hearts grow tired and feeble in the desultory service of they know not what; against how many names that woeful record is being written day by day, "The last state of that man is worse than the first;" while all the time it is only a little courage, a little rousing of one's self, a little venture in the strength of faith, that is needed to enthrone above the empty, listless soul the one love that can give joy and peace and clearness through all the changes of this world; the One Lord Who can control, absorb, ennoble, and fulfil all the energies of a spiritual being.—The love of God; the growing realization of all that His love has done and borne for me; the thrilling discovery, the steady recognition of the patience, the forbearance, the unwearied gentleness wherewith He has been waiting and working that, after all, I might not lose the bliss for which His love created me;—here is the motive power which has made the saints; here is the force which still day after day comes rushing in to occupy some heart which "the Lord hath redeemed and delivered from the hand of the enemy." It is that love which alone gives meaning and harmony and strength to every life that is humbly

and thankfully yielded to its service. It is that love, quickened and increased by the sacramental grace of God, which garrisons the soul against all who hate it, and keeps it in His perfect peace, so that no harm can happen unto it, so that no power of the evil one can enter in and dwell there.

III. The application of these thoughts to the great work upon which you will soon be entering[1] seems clear and direct; let me try to speak of it very briefly in three ways.

(*a*) First, then, we must never, in any work that we try to do in God's Name, set before ourselves or others a negative aim. The aim, the hope, the constant thought, must be not only to cast out sin, but to bring in love. It will never do, as Gordon wrote once, "to wish for the absence of evil, and yet not to desire the Presence of God."[2] It is, indeed, a great thing if we can help some one who is touched by the Mission to escape from the mastery of some sin that has dragged down his life; to drive out the evil spirit of drunkenness, or gambling, or impurity, or avarice; to break away from associations which are ruining him, or to resolve that he will think no more of a

[1] This sermon was preached in the Church of St. Columba at Sunderland, to those who were to take part in the Sunderland Mission.

[2] C. G. Gordon's "Reflections in Palestine," p. 95.

grudge that has for years, perhaps, made it impossible for him ever really to say the Lord's Prayer;[1]—aye, it is a great thing, a thing worth living, toiling, praying for. But it is not all; that victory is only the opportunity for another and a greater. It will never do to "wish for the absence of evil, and yet not to desire the Presence of God." Nothing is secured until He is there; until His love is shed abroad in the heart. Only when His Holy Spirit rules and guides and cheers a man, teaching him the love of God, bringing home to him the astounding message of the Cross, disclosing to him the power of renewal that Christ's infinite compassion won for us, making him feel how marvellously God has borne with all his ingratitude and rebellion, and waited that He might have mercy on him,—only then will the evil spirit, if he dares to return and tries to enter in, feel that a Stronger than he has occupied and garrisoned the heart.

(*b*) And then, secondly, that we may thus aim high, we must, thoughtfully and steadily, realize the spiritual capacities of the human heart; we must try, by frequent prayer, by humility and watchfulness, to understand and remember, so far as our hearts and minds can reach, what God is willing to do in those to whom He sends us. I am sure that it is a very

[1] Cf. François Coppée, "Le Pater."

common mistake to underrate the spiritual capacity of those with whom we have to do, especially among the poor. Because their lives are hard and rough, and their pleasures unlike ours; because they may have little time for prayer; because they cannot express themselves, or use religious language; because the sins which beset them happen to be, in most men's eyes, more disfiguring than those which beset educated and prosperous people; therefore we seem almost to think that the aim for them cannot be very high; that they cannot receive the very highest truth. We forget that God the Holy Ghost is ready to make them to be numbered with Christ's saints. Never let us forget that; for the earnest of that work of His in the lives of the poor is the most glorious and beautiful thing, perhaps, a man can ever see; and one will never see it unless one is gentle and hopeful and reverent in all one's thoughts of them. But then we may learn how the grace of God, the light and life that flow from His indwelling, can lift the very weariest and hardest-driven soul into a dignity of endurance, a radiance of faith, a simplicity of love, far above all that this world can give or take away. Yes, right through the constant stress of need; right through the daily hardships, and in the midst of all the storms of temptation round about them, there is indeed a beauty

and a joy that comes into men's homes and lives, aye, and into their very faces, when, through the revelation of His love and through the power of His sacraments, He enters in and dwells with them, to take the vacant throne of their hearts, to claim them for his own and be their God. And I think there is no beauty and no joy so well worth working for, so wonderful to see, as that; and none that seems so like an earnest of the life of heaven.

(*c*) And then, lastly, if we think of the greatness of the capacities that are to be realized, if we think of the high aim that is to be kept in view, we may be sure that there will be need of great patience in the work; of that true patience which has been called the queen of the virtues; the patience which includes both endurance and perseverance; the quiet, constant, undiscouraged maintenance of a noble purpose.[1] A high aim will always demand great patience; and to remember often what the aim is may help you patiently to persevere, however long the strain and effort may prove to be. For often, I think, the reason of impatience is a poor idea of what is to be attained. So, when children are watching any one at work, they will wonder why he does not get on faster, why he is taking such a time over it; because

[1] Cf. R. C. Trench, "New Testament Synonyms," pp. 197, 198.

they cannot see, as the workman does, how exact and finished and perfect the result is to be. So, again, when people have to bear great suffering, some may be offended and inclined to rebel; because they cannot see the everlasting glory, the unspeakably high calling, for which that suffering is helping to prepare the soul. They put the outcome of it all too low. And so, too, in this case. Remember the height of the aim, the splendour of the hope; not simply to produce here and there some amendment in the outward look of things; but to bear, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, the love of God into the hearts of men; to help them to yield themselves to Him; to teach them to be glad with the true happiness which He designs for them; to bring the calm, pure light of heaven among the troubles and sorrows and difficulties of this earth. Remember that, and surely it will not seem strange if for such a hope there may be need, after the Mission has passed, of even years of watchfulness and prayer and loving service. For so may God achieve the full work of His compassion; that those who, by His grace, have driven out the evil from their hearts, may go on to bring their lives more and more perfectly under the glad mastery of His love, abiding ever in that increasing strength and brightness which issue from the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit.

VIII.

THE DISASTERS OF SHALLOWNESS.

"Some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture."

St. Luke viii. 6.

"When the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away."

St Matt. xiii. 6.

It is easy to bring before our minds the sight of which our Lord here speaks. It may well be that as He speaks His eyes are resting on it, and His hand perhaps, is pointing to it.[1] In one part of a cornfield sloping down towards the Sea of Galilee, He may have marked how thin a coating of soil covered the rock of the hillside. The seed sown in that shallow ground has had a rapid and a feeble growth; the rock has checked its roots from striking downwards to reach the nourishment it needs; and so checked and forced, perhaps, into unnaturally quick development by the hot surface of the stone, the plant has, as

[1] Cf. R. C. Trench, "The Parables of our Lord," p. 66.

we say, run to stalk; the energy which should have been spent in secretly penetrating to the sources of sustenance and renewal has been all thrown into a showy and ill-nourished growth. There may have been a fair look of promise at the first; but there is no reserve or reality of strength; there is no communication with the hidden springs of refreshment when the need comes; and as soon as the fierce rays of the Eastern sun beat down upon it, the thin and frail and rootless and resourceless plant withers away. The heat which might have advanced and ripened and perfected it, had its growth been gradual and well sustained, is too much for it now. There is in it no robustness to bear the strain, no substance to be matured by it; and because it has no moisture and no root, when the sun is up it withers away.

As we pass from the parable to its interpretation let us fasten on this one point—that as, in the order of nature, the agency, the influence, which ripens one plant, may scorch and ruin another; so, in the analogous sphere of moral growth, what tells on one man for the increase of strength and maturity and fruitfulness may be full of peril and misery, if not of sheer disaster, in the life of another.[1] Our Lord Him-

[1] Cf. R. C. Trench, *ubi supra*, p. 73.

self seems to bring out for us this lesson in the parable. It is, He says, in time of trial, it is when affliction or persecution arises because of the Word, that those whose spiritual life is thus rootless and precarious fall away. "Blessed," He had said, "are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, . . . for My sake." But here it is just that persecution which reveals the weakness and works the ruin. The trouble, the discipline, which should have braced and ennobled the character, only demoralizes and overbears it; that which should have been, in the highest sense, for the man's wealth is unto him an occasion of falling. In a different figure the Prophet Jeremiah brings vividly before us the same terrible disappointment, the utter dreariness of fruitless discipline, when he speaks of the refiner's furnace heated to the uttermost, till all the lead that should act as a solvent is used up, and the bellows are burnt by the blaze, and still no silver is yielded; "the founder melteth in vain."[1] And it is, surely, the saddest failure we can ever see, when the stress of pain, or sorrow, or trouble comes upon a man, and leaves him no better than he was; no humbler, no gentler,

[1] Jer vi. 29.

no more thoughtful for the cares and sufferings of others, no less worldly and selfish, no more nearly ready to die. It is a failure so dismal and barren that we can hardly bear to think of it; it seems at first the one part of the great mystery of pain into which no light penetrates. Mysterious indeed it is; though no one who has learnt the manifoldness of the uses of adversity, the diverse, hidden, complex ways through which it works on characters, and tells in lives that are even incidentally brought near to it, will venture to speak of any suffering as really fruitless, or to limit the silent energy with which even that which seems most hopelessly to fail as discipline may yet be working round to some great and far-off outcome of beneficence. Still, mysterious certainly it is that the opportunity of learning through suffering should be given, and neglected or abused; but the mystery, as has been truly said, belongs really to the problem of evil, not to the problem of pain.[1] That moral evil should perplex and thwart the work of suffering is not stranger than that it should be allowed in other ways to mar God's work and to disfigure human life; that men should spurn the teaching of pain and sorrow is not stranger than that they should abuse the gift

[1] J. R. Illingworth, in "Lux Mundi," p. 118.

of a great intellect or a splendid education; that suffering should make a man hard or sullen is not stranger than that culture should make him conceited or insolent. In both cases that which should have been for his wealth is unto him an occasion of falling; in both cases the gift of God is spoilt by the blindness and wilfulness of man; in both cases we find ourselves confronted with that stubborn and arresting fact of moral evil; that which has been called "the one irrational, lawless, meaningless thing in the whole universe;" that which reason will not enable us to explain, nor conscience, thank God, suffer us to explain away.[1]

We must, then, bear patiently the sense of strangeness and perplexity with which we think of those who suffer pain, and seem to learn no lesson and to gain no strength or beauty from it:—the secret of that defeat of love is hidden in the obscurity hanging round the certain fact of moral evil. It is for us to mark, for our own sake and for the sake of all on whom our life or influence may tell, what is the especial fault with which our Lord connects, in the Parable of the Sower, this pitiful misuse of discipline: what is the form of self-indulgence of which He

[1] A. L. Moore, "Oxford House Papers," p. 151; J. R. Illingworth, in "Lux Mundi," p. 116.

warns us here that it imperils or destroys the capacity of understanding pain and sorrow when they come to us.

Surely it is the self-indulgence of shallowness in religion.—We know the disastrous perils of shallowness in the intellectual life; the weakness and fruitlessness of the mind that never really takes a truth home to itself, never lets it put forth all its meaning, never has the patience or the honesty thoroughly to appropriate it; the mind that is content hastily to receive and reproduce a phrase instead of toiling to realize and interpret a fact. We know, perhaps by some sad and humiliating experience of our own, the poverty, the tentativeness, the insecurity under any real strain, which that form of self-indulgence, the self-indulgence of seeking high interest on scanty capital, entails in the life of the intellect. It should be, I think, the chief gain of a man's time here,[1] so far as merely mental discipline is concerned, that he should realize the unworthiness and discredit of all such hasty forwardness. And closely analogous to this is that great peril to which our Lord is pointing when He speaks of the shallow soil, and the showy, rootless growth that withered when the heat beat down upon it. "He that heareth the word, and

[1] This sermon was preached at a College Service in Oxford.

straightway with joy receiveth it."—"*Straightway* with joy." The message that began, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" the message that centres in the Cross, with its tremendous disclosure of the horror and awfulness of sin; the message which speaks to us of the Son of God, made subject for our sakes to hunger and weariness, to scorn and hatred, to agony and death; the message which declares again and again how we too must take up our cross and follow Him if we would be His disciples; the message which forces on our sight the unspeakable gravity of human life, and of its issues when this world is done with; the message that speaks to us of the day of judgment, and of the outer darkness, and of weeping and gnashing of teeth; the message in which, as one has marked, from the lips of Him Who loves us with the love that passeth knowledge, there come, for His very love's sake, "words which shake the heart with fear;"[1]—surely this is not a message which a man can really take in its entirety into his soul with nothing but immediate, unhindered joy; nothing but a light-hearted gladness in the moral beauty it presents, the hopes of which it speaks, its promises of forgiveness, and its note of victory. Joy there is, indeed,

[1] Cf. R. W. Dale, "The Old Evangelicalism and the New," p 40

for all who truly take the message to themselves, and humbly dare, God helping them, to seek to know all that it has to say to them; joy which has some semblance, some forecast of that for which He endured the Cross; joy such as St. Paul and St. John write about; joy such as we may have seen sometimes in the unearthly radiance of its victory over pain, and death, and sorrow, and crying. Yes; but there is something else first; something else, which seldom "for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous;" something else, without which that inexpensive brightness, that easy hopefulness that somehow things will all come right with us, is apt to be a frail, resourceless growth, withering away when the sun is up, and the hot winds of trial are sweeping over it. For if Christianity is to be to us what we know it has been, what we sometimes see it is to Christ's true servants, in the time of trouble, when the heat is beating down upon us, we must have opened out our hearts to it, we must have broken up the soil for it, that freely and deeply its roots may penetrate our inner being; we must have laid bare our life to its demands; we must have taken to ourselves, in silence and sincerity, its words of judgment with its words of hope; its sternness with its encouragement; its denunciations with its promises; its requirements

with its offer; its absolute intolerance of sin with its inconceivable and Divine long-suffering towards sinners.

Surely, surely we need to think more than many of us do think of these things; we need to realize that no religious life is strong which does not rest on penitence—penitence, thorough and sincere and living; penitence such as brings the soul, with all its secret sins, all its half-conscious self-deception, all its cherished forms of self-indulgence, right into contact with the demand, the sternness, the perfect holiness of Him Who died for it.

Often, I think, there are trials of doubt and onsets of unbelief, in which the endurance of a man's faith may depend on nothing else so much as on this—whether he has really known, not the evidences of Christianity, not its coherence as a theological system, not its appeal to our higher emotions in great acts of worship, not even the beauty of its moral ideal, but its power to penetrate the heart and to convince of sin; its power to break down our pride with the disclosure of God's love and patience with us, with our blindness and ingratitude, our obstinate rejection of His goodness to us; its power, then, to bear into a broken and a contrite heart the first glimmer and the growing radiance of that joy that cannot be till

penitence has gone before—the joy that no man taketh from us; the joy that all the discipline of life may only deepen and confirm; and that, through the heat of sorrow and suffering and persecution, when and as God wills, may be ripened unto life eternal.

IX.

HALF-HEARTEDNESS.

"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."
ST. JAMES i. 8.

IT does not seem necessary to enter into the question as to the fitness with which this Epistle is appointed for the Feast of St. Philip and St. James,[1] —the question, that is to say, whether the writer of the Epistle, generally identified with James, called the Lord's brother, the first Bishop of the Church of Jerusalem, is or is not to be further identified with James, the son of Alphæus, who is the companion of St. Philip in our calendar. A question which has been undecided for fifteen centuries, and which has been the subject of numberless treatises, seems probably out of the reach of decision unless some fresh evidence should emerge to settle it; while little practical teaching could be gained from any hasty account of it. It seems better to learn from the Epistle, as it is this day brought before us, the clear, incisive lessons

[1] Upon which day this sermon was preached.

which it has to teach us. And so I would ask you to look with me at one of the clearest and the most incisive of these—a lesson which may seem, perhaps, to have some special force in our day.

I. "A double-minded [or half-hearted] man," St. James tells us, "is unstable in all his ways."—*A double-minded man.* The designation is wide in range and deep in penetration. Perhaps there may not be one of us to whom in some way, in some degree, it does not apply; not one of us who is not in some part of his life hindered and enfeebled and imperilled by the vacillation of half-heartedness. But in its outcome, if it be not checked, if a man does not, gradually at least, with advancing efforts of faith and courage, get free from it, it is a terrible misunderstanding and misuse of life. The word which St. James uses was taken forty years ago as the title of one of the most subtle, penetrating, pathetic poems of modern times—a poem such as only Oxford, one might think, and the Oxford of the last half-century, could have produced. In *Dipsychus* Mr. Clough has drawn with great power, with searching keenness, the irresolute waverings, the fore-doomed compromises, the inconsistent self-excusings, of the double-minded man; the man to whom even his tempter says at last, or nearly at last—

"Heartily you will not take to anything;
Whatever happen, don't I see you still
Living no life at all? . . .
Will you go on thus
Until death end you? If indeed it does.
For what it does, none knows. Yet as for you,
You hardly have the courage to die outright:
You'll somehow halve even it."[1]

In Dipsychus the uttermost disaster of the double-minded man, with his "ineffective, indeterminate swaying," is set forth; but we are reminded that the inconsistency through which and in which he has moved towards that disaster is nothing uncommon; when, in the epilogue, an average, unimaginative, self-complacent critic, looking back to all the arguments of the evil spirit, Dipsychus' tempter, thinks that "if only it hadn't been for the way he said it, and that it was he who said it, much that he said would have been sensible enough."[2]

II. Yes, double-mindedness, half-heartedness. In widely varying degrees and ways it is indeed a most frequent secret of weakness and unrest, of failure and peril; it keeps men back from the task that was marked with their name; it takes the spring and brightness out of life; it is the foe of inner freedom, and of all health, and strength, and growth, and peace.—Let us look at three forms which the

[1] A. H. Clough, "Poems," p. 125. [2] Id. *ibid.*, p. 133.

trouble takes—three parts of our life which it invades and mars.

(*a*) First let us think of that form of half-heartedness of which especially St. James is here speaking—the half-heartedness of a divided trust; half-heartedness in prayer. He is saying how wisdom, the wisdom that is from above, the wisdom by which people see their way through all the tangles of this world, is to be sought from God; and how surely God will give it. But, then, it must be asked in faith, with true, whole-hearted committal of one's self to God, with no doubting, no faltering irresolutely to and fro; for he who so doubts and falters is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed about—and "let not that man think that he shall obtain anything from the Lord;" he is a half-hearted man, unsteady in all his ways.—What is the temper, the bearing of mind and heart, of which St. James is speaking? Not surely that imperfection of faith, that liability to days of dimness and of weakness, which very many may know whom God is truly leading on, nearer and nearer to Himself; not that hindered but true-hearted venture which spoke and was accepted in the prayer, "Lord, I believe: help Thou my unbelief." No, not that; but the temper which really has in it no clear element of

venture or of self-committal at all; the temper which thinks of prayer as little more than something which may do some good and can do no harm; the temper of one who turns to pray by way of being on the safe side; the temper that is prepared, if the prayer be not granted, simply to look out for some other way in which the result may be attained; the temper that has never realized the deep and utter incongruity between the simplest act of prayer, and all cold-hearted scheming for one's own advantage—between prayer and selfishness. Half-heartedness in prayer it is when one half or some smaller fragment of the heart has some expectation from prayer, while the rest more solidly relies on shrewdness, or money, or influence, or self-will; when natural instruments of success are regarded not as means which may be (if they are humbly, faithfully, unselfishly employed) directed and hallowed by the blessing of the Almighty, but as alternative ways, resources in the background, second strings, if the prayer should not have the result which selfishness desired from it. It was a saying of General Gordon's, "Do not try planning and praying and then planning again; it is not honouring to God."[1] And it would be hard to measure how much of the extraordinary power of

[1] C. G. Gordon's Letters to his Sister, p. 5.

his life was due to this—that there was no reserve in his committal of himself to God; that he lived with an undivided trust; that he had marked and judged and dealt with the temptation to half-heartedness in prayer.

(*b*) Again, how many of us are hindered and confused by the half-heartedness of our love towards God; the divided and inconstant desire with which we seek the blessings of goodness, the joy of our Lord, the gladness of His service. We may have seen more or less clearly that there is indeed no steady happiness in life save the happiness of serving Him, the happiness of unselfishness, of self-forgetfulness for the sake of others. This may have been borne in on us through some of the many ways in which God lets us see the truth; and we may be quite sure of it in our quieter times, when we have the opportunity and the courage to think.—But to let go of other things; to set our whole heart upon the kingdom of God and His righteousness; not to plan any other pleasures for ourselves, but to be willing that they should come to us when and as He wills, to be enjoyed as His gifts, with thankfulness to Him, with a heart that all along is quite free and ready for His work; to leave the ordinary well-known ways in which we have seemed fairly

sure, at all events, of being comfortable, if not happy, of having occasional pleasures, even though we may be getting to care for them less and less; to do without excitement, or praise, or luxury, or a margin of leisure, and to make up our minds that we will plan for no happiness outside God's service, and that all that we enjoy shall be what freely comes, unplanned, from Him, as we go about the work that He has given us to do;—this is the real venture of faith; this needs some whole-heartedness of desire; this is what we find so hard. We want some gloss upon that stern saying of St. James, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Though we know it is no good, we cannot give up trying to get on well with both.

(*c*) And then, thirdly, lying very near to this, there is the half-heartedness of a divided intention. We do intend to do God's Will; but, then, it must not go too far from our way; it must not ask too much of us. Or, we intend to do God's will; but so that incidentally our own will may be gratified at the same time. We will press forward in His work, we will be strenuous and constant in the discharge of duty; but, then, there must be credit reflected, if not on ourselves, at least on the party to which we belong; we look that in some way or another it may prove

to have been a good thing for us that we were so dutiful. If we do not pursue honesty as being the best policy, at least we expect that it will appear to be so in the end. And so the poor, unworthy motive is always coming across us—the unowned purpose must be kept in view; the secret intention claims half our heart; and, almost without knowing it, the strength and reality of our choice and will to do God's work grows less and less.

III. Half-heartedness in faith and love and purpose —most of us, I fear, know something of such things; and most of us, I think, will own how exactly St. James fastens upon the practical outcome of it all. "The double-minded [the half-hearted] man is unstable in all his ways." Unsettledness, disorder, inequality, unsteadiness, restlessness, confusion, hesitation, bewilderment,—are not these, indeed, the characteristics that prevail more and more in the half-hearted life; these, with all the vacillation, the weakness, the dim-sightedness, that they entail? Do we not know that, in whatsoever degree they have troubled or are troubling us, it is our own half-heartedness that is most of all to blame? Surely, half-heartedness, wavering and faltering in faith, or love, or purpose, the hopeless toil of living two lives,—this is one chief source, at least, of much of the unhappiness

and unrest, the weariness and overstrain and breaking down in modern life. We get so tired with trying to blend what will not mix; we spend so much of our strength in vain while we try to work two ways at once; we make so little progress while we are always crossing over from the one road to the other. We know the trouble, the wastefulness, of half-heartedness; we have often longed, it may be, for the unity which yet we have not quite courage enough to grasp and hold and trust. And we know how hard it is—hard, perhaps, especially in our day and in this place[1]—to overcome our half-heartedness, to bring our whole life into one allegiance. But one thing we can do, please God, with some steady increase of self-mastery. It may be hard to attain to such a unity and simplicity of trust as made the strength of Gordon's life; it may be hard to cast out the lingering love of worldly gratification, and to fasten all our affection upon the things of God; but unity of intention, single-mindedness in aim and purpose,—this is, God helping us, to a very great degree within our reach. We can be watchful to keep a pure and disinterested aim; to allow in our hearts no plan that we would not avow; to cast out, to make no terms with self-seeking. This we can do,

[1] This sermon was preached in Oxford.

by the grace of God; this in itself is much, and it leads on to more. It may be, indeed, that all through this life we shall never wholly conquer the temptations of half-heartedness; never be secure against the intrusion of the low thought, the mean motive, the feeble looking back, the sordid suspicion, which take the glow out of things well begun; which thrust themselves into the company of whatever generous or righteous purpose we had formed. But if we are resolute to deal firmly with these things when they come; resolute not to let them tell in action or in speech, not to let them pervert judgment; resolute to keep them down with a strong hand, and hold on our way in spite of them; we may find not only that our purpose is growing more single and whole-hearted, and our intention purer and more vigorous; but that in our affection also, and in our trust, there is an ever-increasing unity; that with the freedom of God's service comes the peace that they have who love His Law, and, above all, that blessing of clear-sightedness, of spiritual discernment which is only known as a man escapes from the vacillation and dimness of the double-minded into the strength, the joyful gladness, of the true-hearted—even the blessing of the "pure in heart: for they shall see God."

X.

THE IMAGE OF THE LORD.

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my Gospel."

2 Tim. ii. 8.

I. A HEAVY burden had been laid upon the young disciple to whom St. Paul so wrote. Before he had reached middle life,[1] Timotheus had been placed as the Apostle's delegate, with episcopal authority over the Christian community in Ephesus; and it seems clear that he was still responsible for that great trust when this letter was sent to him.[2] It is hard to realize the strain which at that time such an office must have put upon a man's robustness of conviction and tenacity of purpose. It needed, indeed, a clear head and a steady hand to guide the Church of

[1] Cf. Salmon, "Introduction to the New Testament," p. 501.

[2] Cf. Gore, "The Church and the Ministry," pp. 246–248; Alford's "Prolegg. to the Pastoral Epistles," pp. 101–103; Shirley, "On the Apostolic Age," pp. 116, 117.

Christ at Ephesus; it needed, above all else, a heart that no secret unreality, or bitterness, or self-seeking had been stealthily enfeebling against the day of trial. To believe with an unwavering confidence that the future was Christ's, in spite of all that pride and splendour of paganism, which nowhere bore itself more arrogantly than in Ephesus; when all Asia and the world was thronging to the worship of Diana, to be always sure that her magnificence was worse than worthlessness—a hideous and degrading lie, that must break up and be gone like a bad dream at the first touch of light; to be quite untroubled by all the brilliancy and vigour of the social life in which the claim of Christ was blankly ignored or cleverly made fun of; to look up at the great temple gleaming in the sunlight, famous as the one mansion worthy of the gods, and then to hold to it constantly that that little cluster of humble folk, meeting day by day for their Holy Eucharist, had found a truth and owned a Lord before Whose glory all that pomp and strength of idol-worship should be utterly abolished;—this could not but make for most men a severe demand on faith. But for Timotheus there were keener tests of reality and courage than all these. The language and emphasis of the two letters addressed to him strongly suggest the impression

that he was not of a very tough, robust, or stubborn temperament. He was not a man who, when things seemed to be going against him or getting into confusion, could shrug his shoulders and refuse to be harassed. Rather, he seems one to whom antagonism, insolence, isolation, would mean sharp suffering; one whose heart might grow sick as he looked at a gathering storm of hostility and danger; one on whose courage and constancy such a storm would break with a severe if not a staggering shock. And certainly there were black and angry clouds coming up over the sky; and things promised a rough time for the Church at Ephesus. The recent persecution under Nero, though its brutalities may have been confined to Rome,[1] had shown what Christians might be called to face whenever policy or passion chanced to prompt a massacre. There were not wanting those who might find it convenient to stir up something of the sort at Ephesus; and the sense that it was always possible could not but tell on the position and outlook of the Church. But graver still was the mischief that was gaining ground within the Church itself; where the restlessness and superstition of some who had seemed to be sincere were corrupting

[1] Cf. Merivale, "History of the Romans under the Empire," vi. 450.

the faith of Christ, and foisting strange, morbid fancies into the centre of the Christian teaching; so that men were drifting off from all reality of religion, through idle talk and sickly exercises of perverted cleverness, towards that moral degradation which, in a place like Ephesus, closed in so readily as soon as faith had ceased to hold a man above it. Let us try to measure all these conditions by anything like the same scale on which we estimate the difficulties of our own day; let us remember how small and weak and unpromising a movement Christianity must have seemed to a dispassionate Ephesian critic; let us add the thought that Timotheus was on the very point of losing the one man through whose vivid, penetrating, and inspiring personality he had drawn the strongest impulse, the constant guidance and encouragement of his life (since the time of St. Paul's departure was at hand); and we may probably feel that things were looking very dark and threatening and terrible to the sensitive and delicate man who had been placed in charge of the Ephesian Church.

II. If we were writing to a friend amidst difficulties so great as these, and especially if we were writing with the expectation that we might never write to him again, we should certainly be most careful what

we said. We should do our best to enter thoroughly into his position; we should feel that there was a grave responsibility in being allowed to write to him at such a time; and that we must write nothing which was not absolutely real, and likely to come home to him. And then, I think, this would be a part of our desire as we wrote;—that we might fasten upon his memory, with a deep and clear impression, some thought which seemed to us most likely to emerge into the front of consciousness at the time of peril or despondency, and to rally the wavering forces of the will. We know how one recollection, distinct and dominant in the mind, has often been the decisive force at a critical moment; how upon the battle-field, for instance, or under the almost overpowering pressure of temptation, the thought of a man's country, of his home, of his ancestral traditions, has reinforced as with a fresh tide of strength his faltering heart, and borne him on to victory, whether by success or death. We may recall the scene in one of our African campaigns, where the thought of a man's old school, and the boyish eagerness anyhow to bring it to the front, was the impulse of a splendid courage. Yes; there are images in most men's minds which, if they rise at the right moment, will do much to make them heroes. A word, a glance,

some well-known sight, some old, familiar strain of music, may beckon the image out of the recesses of the memory; and, if the man has in him the capacity of generous action, he will use it then.

III. It is on this characteristic of human nature that St. Paul relies, as he writes to Timotheus the words of the text. He would avail himself of this; he would raise it to its highest conceivable employment; he would enlist it as a constant, ready, powerful ally on the side of duty—on the side of God. He may never see Timotheus, never write to him again. Well, then, he will leave dinted into his mind, by a few incisive words, one commanding and sustaining image. For it is not, as it appears in our English version, any event out of the past, however supreme in its importance, however abiding in its results, that St. Paul here fastens upon the memory of his disciple; it is not the abstract statement of a truth in history or theology, however central to the faith, however vast in its consequences; it is a living Person, Whom St. Paul has seen, Whose Form he would have Timotheus keep ever in his mind, distinct, beloved, unrivalled, sovereign: "Bear in remembrance Jesus Christ, raised from the dead."[1] When the hardship which Christ's true soldier must expect is pressing

[1] Cf. A. Plummer, "The Pastoral Epistles," pp. 354–358.

heavily upon you; when the task of self-discipline seems tedious and discouraging; when the day's work seems more than you can bear, and when night, it may be, brings but little rest; when you are sick at heart to see folly and wilfulness, conceit and treachery, ruining what years of labour and devotion hardly reared; then let that ever-living Form stand out before you: "Bear in remembrance Jesus Christ raised from the dead." Bear Him in remembrance as He now is, enthroned in everlasting victory. He toiled to utter weariness; He pleased not Himself. He was despised and rejected; He was betrayed by one whom He had chosen, denied by another, deserted by all. He suffered more than thought can compass; and if ever "failure" could be written at the end of any enterprise, it might have seemed reasonable to write it of His work, as they took His Body from the Cross. Well, then, if your tasks and disappointments seem too much for you, bear Him in remembrance as He now is.—Never can the disproportion between advantages and difficulties, between resources and demands, have seemed to human eyes wider than when the Galilæan Peasant came to found a world-wide kingdom; never did an unreasonable venture seem to end in a more natural disaster than when the religious leaders of His own

people combined with the representatives of the Roman government to crush Him with a strong hand. Well, then, if the strength, the wickedness, the wealth, the confidence, of paganism at Ephesus at times appal and stagger you; if there seems something irresistibly discouraging in the brilliance, the culture, the self-sufficiency, of the society which ignores or ridicules you;—bear in remembrance Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, exalted now to the Majesty on high.—Yes, bear Him in remembrance, not only as the supreme and all-illuminating instance of the victory that overcometh the world; not only as One Who has erased the word "impossible" out of the vocabulary that can be used in speaking of God's work; but also as the ever-living Strength of His servants, the ever-watchful Guardian of His Church; as One Who knows your need, and is indeed sufficient for your help; Who never can forget or fail you; beneath Whose gaze you serve, and by Whose love you shall be crowned.

IV. Let us take two thoughts, this Easter morning, from the counsel which St. Paul thus gives.

(*a*) First, that he is trying to lodge in the heart of Timotheus' life and work that which has been the deepest and most effective force in his own.—St. Paul was convinced that he had seen the Risen Lord; and

the energy, the effect, of that unfading Image throughout his subsequent life might go some way to prove that the conviction was true. Physical weight is sometimes measured by the power of displacement; and in the moral and spiritual sphere we tend, at least, to think that there must be something solid and real to account for a change so unexpected, so unearthly, so thorough, so sustained through every trial, so vast in its practical outcome, as was the conversion of St. Paul. No doubt rests on the fact of the conversion, nor on the greatness of its results; in regard to both we can appeal to Epistles which the most trenchant criticism now leaves unquestioned; and if St. Paul declares that the whole impulse of his new life came from the sight of One Who had been crucified and had risen from the dead, we may surely claim that his witness is a real contribution to the evidence of Christ's Resurrection. It may be set aside; it must be, if our knowledge of all things, actual and possible, enables us to say that there can be no resurrection of the dead; but that would be a bold presumption. Or it may be justly said that no one man's conviction, however commended by its steadiness under trial and its practical effect, can bear the weight of so stupendous an inference. But, then, St. Paul's certainty that he had seen Christ after His

Crucifixion does not stand alone to bear that weight; it is but one part in a large and various mass of evidence. Similarly, it may be said with truth that the convictions of enthusiastic men have produced immense results, even when they were utterly mistaken. But let St. Paul's conviction be taken in its context; let justice be done to the character it wrought in him; to the coherence and splendour of the work it animated; to the penetrating, sober insight of his practical teaching; to the consistency, not of expression, but of inmost thought and life, which is disclosed to any careful study of his writings; lastly, to the grasp which his words have laid upon the strongest minds in Christendom through all succeeding centuries, the prophetic and undying power which, amidst vast changes of methods and ideas, men widely different have felt and reverenced in these Epistles;—let these distinctive notes of St. Paul's work be realized, together with its incalculable outcome in the course of history, and it will seem hard to think that the central, ruling impulse of it all was the obstinate blunder of a disordered mind.—This at least, I think, may be affirmed, that if there were against belief in Christ's Resurrection any such difficulty as the indisputable facts of St. Paul's life and work present to disbelief, we should find it treated

as of crucial importance; and that, I think, not unjustly.[1]

(*b*) "Bear in remembrance Jesus Christ, raised from the dead." It is the Form which has made him what he is, for life or for death, that St. Paul would with his last words, it may be, leave clenched for ever on the mind and heart of his disciple. The vision of that Form may keep him true and steadfast when all is dark, confused, and terrible around him. May not we do well to take the bidding to ourselves? We know, perhaps, that our hearts are weak, and our wills unsteady; the time in which we should have stored up strength against the day of trial may not have been used as now we wish it had been. For it seems as though life were likely to grow harder as the years go on; as though it might be very difficult to have a right judgment in all things, and to keep loyally in the path of charity and truth. There are signs of trouble and confusion in the air; and some faint hearts begin to fail; and some of us, perhaps, see not our tokens so clearly as we did. But One we may see, as we lift our eyes this Easter Day; "it is He Who liveth, and was dead; and, behold, He is alive for evermore;" He Who cannot fail His

[1] Cf. F. W. Farrar, "Life of St. Paul," pp. 114, 115; Milligan, "The Resurrection of our Lord," pp. 40–45.

Church, or leave even the poorest and least worthy of His servants desolate and bewildered when the darkness gathers, and the cry of need goes up; He Who will be to any one of us what He was to His Apostles; He, our Strength against all despondency, and irresoluteness, and cowardice, and sloth; He Who knows us perfectly, yet loves us—ah, how strange it is!—yet better than He knows; He Who, if we have borne with patient courage our few years of trial in the twilight here, will receive us into that everlasting light which He both died and rose again to win for us.

XI.

THE EFFICACY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST.

> "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."
>
> 2 Tim. iii. 15.

I. There is a singular and pathetic beauty in the relation between the old man who writes these words and the young man to whom he sends them. A wide contrast in natural characteristics, and an entire fellowship in devotion to one cause, are often the conditions of a close and affectionate friendship; and it seems probable that the affection of St. Paul for Timotheus rested on some such grounds. Unlike in temperament the two men certainly appear. For, with whatever hindrances of ill health or nervous constitution, St. Paul was clearly one whose intensity of purpose, tenacity of principle, and vehemence of will made it likely that to any opposition, where his own judgment was distinct, he would "give place by

subjection, no, not for an hour." Timotheus, on the other hand, seems to have been by nature one to whom opposition would always mean distress and pain,[1] to whom firmness would often be difficult and expensive—a character deficient somehow in that useful sort of obstinacy which is an element in some men's power of endurance, and stands them in good stead at hard times. The traits of moral beauty on which St. Paul elsewhere lays stress, in speaking of Timotheus, are such as might well consist with this deficiency; they are the attractions likeliest to be wrought by the grace of God in such a nature. Eminent unselfishness; the capacity for generous self-devotion; warm-heartedness and loyalty in personal affection; a spiritual sense which made the care for others' welfare seem ingenerate and instinctive;—these are the features which, as we read the First Epistle to the Corinthians and the Epistle to the Philippians, appear to supplement the impression of Timotheus' character which we get from the Pastoral Epistles. There is often in such men an unfailing charm of delicacy and gentleness; they seem as though there had been more summer than winter in their lives; while, with some characteristics which may be misnamed effeminate, there is in them a

[1] Cf. Sermon x. p. 164.

really womanly power of patience and self-sacrifice. Surely, if we may form any such idea of Timotheus, we cannot wonder at St. Paul's intense affection for him, as a constant presence of tenderness and sympathy in the midst of much antagonism and disappointment and anxiety. We cannot wonder that St. Paul should have trusted him largely, and believed that he would rightly bear his high charge as Apostolic delegate over the Church of Ephesus;[1] nor yet can we wonder that, as the Apostle thinks of him in the isolation, the perils, the tangled difficulties of his position,[2] as he thinks of the subtlety of error, the restlessness of idle talk, the malignity of moral corruption, the brutality of persecution, all besetting, or likely to beset, that sensitive temperament, a fear should be continually haunting him lest the strain may prove too great; so that he seems never tired of enforcing, with every sanction, every appeal, every encouragement that he can use, the paramount duty of unflinching steadfastness. Again and again that duty is impressed on his disciple's conscience, that it may be safe from all risks of forgetfulness or surprise: "God hath not given us the spirit of fearfulness;" "Be not thou ashamed;"

[1] Cf. Gore, "The Church and the Ministry," p. 246.

[2] Cf Sermon x., pp. 164, 165.

"Take thy share of hardship;" "Hold fast the form of sound words;" "Be strong in grace;" "Continue, abide in the things which thou hast learned;" "Be instant in season, out of season;" "Watch thou in all things;" "Endure afflictions."—It seems that two strong motives hold the Apostle's heart and rule his words as he writes this second letter to Timotheus;—his longing to see just once again the face he loves is only rivalled by his absorbing and persistent eagerness that Timotheus may be ever steadfast in unfaltering allegiance to the truth.—That grave, intense anxiety of one who has not long to live, that a younger man, whom he has taught and loved, may not break down or get bewildered in the increasing perils of the years to come,—surely it has in it a solemnity and a sadness ever renewed amidst the unchanging anxieties of a changeful world.

II. In the words of the text, then, St. Paul reminds Timotheus of one great element and ground of steadfastness in the Christian faith and life. He has been speaking of the terrible development which he foresees for the evils already assailing the Church—of the deepening of darkness and corruption as the days draw in towards the end; and he has turned to plead again with his own dear son, Timotheus, that when he has to stand alone through all these things,

when St. Paul has passed away to wait beyond the veil till Christ shall come and judge the world, he may stand firm and without fear in the one cause for which it is worth while to live and, if it please God, to die. "Abide thou," he says, "in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of:" —and then he lays hold of two facts in Timotheus' past history which should help him to be thus steadfast—"knowing," he adds, first, "from whom thou didst learn" the faith of Christ; and secondly, "that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Let us try to enter into the meaning of this second appeal: to see, so far as we can, what is that especial help which St. Paul expects Timotheus now to gain from his all but lifelong training in the books of the Old Testament; and then on what condition, by what power, he may gain it.

(*a*) The help will lie in that peculiar wisdom which the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament will engender in Timotheus, if he lets them have their proper work in his inner life. He has known them from early childhood—ἀπὸ βρέφους. They are to him not simply an external object of study, but an inward endowment which has conditioned all his growth;

they are lodged very far back in his heart and mind; in their presence, under their influence, he has come to be what he is, to realize himself; he has never known his life without them. He knows them with an intimacy which is more than that of any friendship—an intimacy like that of home; an intimacy which has, of course, its risks in some cases of unobservantness, of inactivity, of indolence, and of ingratitude, but which certainly gives access to depths of meaning unsuspected by ordinary acuteness and even industry. So knowing the writings of the Old Testament, Timotheus should let them exercise upon his character, his ways of thought and action, the power which properly belongs to them.

And he will find it a power of wonderful efficacy in the time of trial. For it is nothing less than this—that they are able to make him wise unto salvation. They will give him that clearness of insight, that justice of thought, which will keep him in the way that leadeth unto life. St. Chrysostom brings out, with characteristic directness and simplicity, the true force of the words *τὰ δυνάμενά σε σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν*. "He who knows the Scriptures as a man ought to know them is offended at nothing that befalls him, but bears all things with a noble endurance." For from the Scriptures he gets "the

true canons and standards of judgment. "And what are these? They are that virtue is good, that vice is evil; that sickness, poverty, persecution, and the like are things indifferent; that the righteous pass through much tribulation in this world; that the works of God are past finding out; and that no words can tell the difference between His ways and ours." Yes, this is the great power which St. Paul claims for the Old Testament—that it will accustom men to the right way of looking at things, and make them see the meaning of their own life more nearly as God sees it; that it will give them more of that strong and pure and quiet wisdom which poor and simple people often have, and with which they go on, quite clear and unperplexed, amidst all the problems and sophistries which entangle many who are more clever and less spiritual. The shrewdness of the unworldly, the penetrating, steady insight of those whose eye is single, who have done with selfish, secret aims,—this is what men may gain from the Holy Scriptures which Timotheus knew. They may be made wise to understand what the will of the Lord is; they may take the measure of all earthly things so truly and surely, with so just an estimate, that they may indeed recognize the Crucified as the fulfilment of the world's true hope, and glory in His Cross; that they may

see how sacrifice both was and is the one true way of victory in this world, and that there is no strength like that which hides itself in patience and humility; that Christ ought to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory; that, in the Eternal Wisdom and by the law of His own perfection, it became Almighty God, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.[1]—"Wise unto salvation." They who are such will trace the ways of God with that clear insight which only trust and love can gain; they will not be offended in their Lord, nor think it strange concerning the fiery trial that tries His servants; they will be ready, when and as He wills, to bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in their bodies. "Wise unto salvation." I suppose there could be no better test or sign of the possession of that wisdom than this—that a man should really own, with inner and complete conviction, that the life of the Beatitudes is indeed the blessed life for men; that in that way men may know more of the very blessedness of God Himself than can be known in any other way on earth; and that the poor in spirit, and they that mourn; the meek, and they that

[1] Cf. B. F. Westcott, "Christus Consummator," pp. 24–27.

hunger and thirst after righteousness; the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted and reviled, are really those whose lives are already in God's sight radiant with the light of heaven, with the glory that shall hereafter be revealed in them.

Brethren, if we might for a moment hold in abeyance the import of the truth that St. Paul was writing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, would not his words have power still to claim our deference? For he certainly had this wisdom of which he speaks. His whole life, every letter that we read of his, the power he has had, and all the outcome of his work, evince it; it is as clear as any trait which we may know in the character of our nearest friend. And St. Paul certainly knew the Scriptures; he had known them all through his early life; he had carried them with him through the great change of his conversion; he had learnt to read them afresh in the new light that then came to him; he had tried them through years and years of work and joy and suffering in the Church of Christ. Hardly any one could have better credentials than St. Paul for speaking about the power of the Old Testament in the discipline of character, or about the imitation of Christ: and he is speaking here under conditions which would ensure the severest accuracy, the simplest

saying what he knows and means. Surely, then, when he tells us that these Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation; that they will show us, frail and dim of sight as we may be, both how to live and how to die; even if we were to consider his words only in this narrow and inadequate way, without thinking of their highest sanction, they would in common sense demand for the study of the Old Testament more thought, and hope, and prayer, and love than nine-tenths of us, I fear—than any of us, it may be—have ever given to it.

(*b*) We have tried to see the power which St. Paul assigns to the Old Testament in the formation and maintenance of character; the help which it can yield towards the inner strength of steadfastness and perseverance. But let us mark the condition which he attaches to our finding this help; the means by which alone we can recognize and release, as it were, this power. It can come to us and we can know it only "through faith which is in Christ Jesus:" διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. "His words"—as Hooker has said—"His words concerning the books of ancient Scripture do not take place but with presupposal of the Gospel of Christ embraced."[1]

The true efficacy of the Old Testament, the Divine

[1] "Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity," I. xiv. 4.

energy with which it can penetrate, inform, control the heart of man, can be rightly known only where that faith is, only in proportion as that faith is true and living. It is from his state of union with Christ, and by the light that Christ is to him, that Timotheus must discern, receive, detain, the hidden wisdom that is stored in the Holy Scriptures. By union with Christ he has attained the point from which their various elements are seen in their true relation and significance, each bearing its divinely intended part in the glory, the witness, of the whole. Only in so far as it is not he that lives, but Christ that liveth in him, is he in perfect sympathy, in vital continuity, as it were, with the gradually disclosed but ever dominant principle of the Old Testament; it is one and the same great central truth of the world's history which gives unity to those ancient Scriptures and to his own inner life. And surely here we touch one of the chief reasons which may be felt to underlie the demand for faith in Christ, for union with Him, as the essential secret of access to the depths of changeless meaning, and the springs of strength and light that are in the Old Testament. Archbishop Trench has said, "It is the necessary condition of a book which shall exert any great and effectual influence, which shall stamp itself with a deep im-

pression upon the minds and hearts of men, that it must have a unity of purpose; one great idea must run through it all. There must be some single point in which all its different rays converge and meet."[1] We should all own, I think, that that is true. We can see how it holds good in every field of art. There is no fault that is more readily felt than the lack of such a unity of purpose—felt even by those who may not know the ground of their disappointment, of their sense that there is a failure somewhere, and that they cannot pass through the work into the artist's mind. For it follows, of course, that it is only when we have rightly and distinctly seen what that ruling thought or purpose is, that we can hope to enter into the work, to understand it and to do justice to it; to know the meaning, and to judge of the fitness of its several parts. In general literature it is, I suppose, the characteristic distinction of the true critic that he thus goes straight to the single, central, sovereign idea of a great work, and thence surveys and studies all the tributary details; while another is engrossed, as usefully and happily, it may be, but with obvious risks of disproportion and misunderstanding, in the examination of those details—often on that side of them which is, as it were, turned

[1] "Hulsean Lectures," p. 20.

away from and irrelevant to the central, animating thought. The one is caught up into glad, controlling fellowship with the poet's mind, and sees, though it be but in a glass, darkly, what he saw; the other fastens on the irregularities of construction, or is distressed at the roughness of a verse.—Yes, to know what any work means, to release its inner strength and beauty, to bring ourselves under its influence, we must have grasped the thought that gives it unity.

Ah! but let that thought be not an artist's vision or a speculation in philosophy, but the thought which transfigures life, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning; not the passing fancy or the delicate conception which holds our interest for a few hours, but the thought which meets the lifelong need and hunger of every heart that knows itself; not a thought which merely speaks, however well, of comfort and encouragement, but the thought which is itself the very strength and hope we crave; not a thought of any sinful man like ourselves, but the thought of God Himself, instinct and quick with His own life, and radiant with His everlasting love;—and then, surely, we need something more than any external recognition, any apprehension of it by the intellect alone. We can know that thought only by

living in its power; only by committing ourselves to its guidance; only by taking it, with the venture of faith, to be the light of our life. The unity of the Old Testament lies in the gradual disclosure of a certain life for men; and its meaning, its wisdom, its Divineness, can be clear to us only if that life is ours. By faith in Christ, by union with Him, men take their stand, as it were, where that life breaks out and triumphs over death; and as its power renews them, as its brightness streams around them, they look back and see the line of light all through the past growing towards the perfect day. That Divine, eternal thought of love, revealed in all its infinite beauty of compassion when the Word was made flesh, invades and occupies their being; and as they yield themselves to its control, they know what was the reality of hope, the principle of discipline, the central purpose of God's dealings with His people all through those ages of expectation and foreshadowing. The central thought of the Bible is the central power of their life; and round that central thought all the mysteries of the past disclose their hidden wealth of meaning, to make them "wise unto salvation," "perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

III. "Through faith which is in Christ Jesus." St. Paul speaks of this as the condition of our knowing

the real power of the Old Testament. We may learn from him, surely, a great lesson in regard to an anxiety felt by many in the present day. The criticism of the Old Testament, the challenge of its authority, the various questions round about it, are stirring thoughts of trouble and uneasiness in many minds. It seems not unlikely that some such wave as that which we have lately seen receding, thank God, from its impetuous onset on the books of the New Testament, may be advancing upon those of the Old. The disquieting influence of such a movement is always wide; and it is perhaps most felt by some who have least considered the real points at issue. And under this influence men are often in a hurry to draw lines of limitation; to establish what seems a scientific frontier; to determine that certain concessions must be made, or certain reserves maintained against all infringement. But it is always hard and perilous work to draw such lines; for harm has often come of their being drawn in the wrong place, too far either one way or the other. And, surely, there is a better course by which each one of us may strengthen his position in regard to the Old Testament; and that is by using every means to make more real and sure his union with Christ. It is hard for us to do justice to that which St. Paul meant by

"faith which is in Christ Jesus;" the word "faith" has been dragged through so many controversies, and thrust so often into false antitheses. But we can see that he meant not less than this—the surrender of one's life to Christ, to be conformed to His example, guided by the daily disclosure of His will, informed and strengthened by His grace; the conviction that for His sake, and by the power of His perfect sacrifice, we can be set free from the sins that hinder and defile us, and know the miracle of God's forgiveness; the growing certainty that He Himself, our Blessed Lord, vouchsafes to come and dwell within us, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, giving us His own life, and making us strong to be true, and humble, and patient, and unselfish; strict with ourselves, as knowing how much need we have of strictness; gentle, and making large allowances for others, as never knowing how sorely they are tried;—enabling us, in spite of all that is past, to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life. So may we live by faith, in living union with Him, seeking continually through deeper penitence, through the nearer knowledge of His life, through the less unworthy welcome of His Eucharistic Presence, to open out our hearts more freely to His love, to enthrone Him in steadier supremacy over all our ways. For thus it may be

we shall gain the surest hold upon those words which heralded His coming into the world; a hold which will be firm through all that seems obscure and hard as yet to understand or set in order; a hold which will ensure our seeing things rightly, and being able, if it please God, to help others when the perplexity and unsettlement has abated. There may be new aspects of the truth that press for recognition; there may be need for some restatement of that which cannot change or fail. New thoughts which are strange to us now may prove, indeed, the clues to secrets we have never read. And we may be able to wait with the frankness and the patience of true insight, if all along we feel, in the certainty of personal experience, that the Holy Scriptures are making us, through God's grace, wiser than we were; and if in them we are learning to discern the forecast glory of the life by which we live—of the example which, as we know more of it, only the more surpasses all our praise and adoration; of the hope which fills us with thanksgiving to Almighty God, Who, in His love, created us for such an end.

XII.

THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE.

"Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more."
ROM. vi. 9.

EVEN this present life is full of the rhythm of the Resurrection; it is ever ready to remind us of the news of Easter. Time after time, if we will have it so, as we look at the visible world, as we gain or recall the lessons of experience, we see some rendering, as it were, of the glory of this Queen of Feasts, some parable of the empty tomb and the stone rolled back and the triumph over death. When the day breaks and the shadows flee away, and all life stirs and wakes again; when the long tyranny of winter yields, and the flowers appear upon the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come; when some great sorrow, or anxiety, or mood of sadness passes from our hearts, and we rediscover the reality of joy; when some chastening dimness of faith, it may be, is taken away, and the light and love of God seem

clearer, dearer, closer to us than ever; when the long days of sickness are forgotten in the new gladness of returning health;—in all that manifold experience of heaviness enduring for a night and joy coming in the morning, the sequence of Holy Week and Easter is enacted, and the note that sounds out loud on this most blessed day is touched again. All life around us and within displays at times some likeness of a rising from the dead.

But as we think of all these types and parables of the Resurrection, we see one abrupt, decisive failure in them all; at one point they all halt, unable further to follow the triumph we commemorate on Easter Day. For in all the brightness is but for a while; the voice of joy and health must fail again, we know, in a few years at the most; we cannot stay upon the height of happiness, or bind the light to linger with us; the leaves that to-day are just revealing that ever fresh surprise of beauty which will soon be the glory of the spring must presently be shivering on the trees or scudding along the roads in the November gale; the clouds return after the rain; the morning cometh, and also the night. As nature would prophesy of the Resurrection, and show forth in outward signs what Easter means, her voice, her power, falters; she can but prophesy in part, for she has no form or type

in all her wealth that will serve to tell of Him Who "being raised from the dead dieth no more." Winter and night and death may come more slowly at one time than at another; there may be a trace of summer in the air when St. Luke's Day comes; there may be a flush of after-glow when the sun has set; death may seem near to us, and then, perhaps, draw back and wait awhile;—but the summer and the light and life itself have all their inexorable law. One alone there is Whose day has no twilight and no night, Whose glory never fades, and over Whom death hath no more dominion; since "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more."

Yes, here is the unique, distinctive splendour of our Saviour's triumph; here He leaves behind Him every earthly semblance of His Resurrection. "He dieth no more." To-day the Crucified declares to us, "I am He that liveth; and I became dead: and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Of Himself, by the free will of His great love, He laid down His life for us; and now He has taken it again for ever and ever. There must come the few days of pause before the Ascension; thenceforth as King and Priest, unchanging and eternal, He ever reigns and pleads for us, in the power of an endless life, an "endless morn of light." His human nature is lifted into the glory which He

had with the Father before the world was; perfect Man, and touched, indeed, with the feeling of our infirmity, He lives for evermore, above the mist and clouds of our dying life, above the thought of death or failure; since by His death He hath destroyed death, and by His rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life. To-day He met an unconquerable hope that was in the hearts of men; He fulfilled a deep instinct which was astir far and wide. It has been truly said that "by a thousand voices and in a thousand ways the world had been declaring that it was not made for death—for that dread and alien thing which, notwithstanding, it found in the midst of it."[1] And Christ our Lord caught up that world-wide hope and made it good; when, as on this day, through the grave and gate of death He issued forth, not into any bounded space of time, any longer term of passing years, but into the ample air of eternity itself—"God from everlasting, Man for evermore." The encircling walls of death were broken through, and humanity had won a vantage-ground beyond its grasp; since 'Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more." Life now, not death, is written at the end of human history.

But is that all? Must we wait till the end to find

[1] R. C. Trench, "Hulsean Lectures," p. 198.

the difference His victory has made? Nature seems to have no type, no emblem, of that perfect triumph over death and darkness; her resurrections are but for a while; the risen dies again. Is He, then, alone and distant in His great deliverance? Is He as one who has crept out by night from a beleaguered city, and got away in safety, leaving his comrades as they were, unhelped by his escape; guarded, perhaps, all the more closely since he broke out and got away? Are all the gains of earth as insecure as ever? Is there no rising here save only to fall back again; no spring that is not transient? Must we wait until we leave this world to see or know the power of an endless life?

No, brethren, we can both see and know it here. It is not far from every one of us. Death can no longer claim to rule this world; for there are whole tracts of life which he cannot touch; and there is that in each which "dieth no more," which has escaped the great doom of transience.

There is, first of all, the Church of the living God—the Body of Christ. He Himself is pledged that it shall not die or fail out of the earth; and through all that could test the strength and disclose the weakness of any society of men it has endured and increased. I suppose there is no solvent or destructive force

which has not at some time tried its power on the Church of Christ; persecution, scorn, hatred, misrepresentation; favour, ease, power, opulence; softness, ambition, worldliness, and profligacy, among laity and clergy alike; infidelity without, and at times, alas! within as well. It has felt all the subtlety and violence of evil; and time after time men have thought and said—at least as confidently as some may say now—that the Church and the religion of the Church are coming to an end. And time after time they have been wrong—absolutely, obviously wrong. For the inner life of the Church, whether men assail it from without or betray it from within, is indeed the endless life of Christ made manifest on earth; it goes untouched through all the unfaithfulness and all the opposition; it abides for the steadfast light and help of all pure, loving souls; and when the tyranny or treachery is overpast, it widens out in ever larger ventures for the glory of God. And in an age of incalculable changes, when all around seems shifting and uncertain, it is something to know that there is one cause which will not betray whatever faith and love a man may give to it; that whatever else breaks up and disappears, there is one Body upon earth which dieth no more.

The power of Christ's endless life is here among

us in His Church; it is here among us also in His truth—that truth which, according to St. Paul's great metaphor, the Church upholds among men as a pillar, and sustains as a foundation.[1] "Heaven and earth," our Saviour said, "shall pass away; but My words shall not pass away;" and His Apostle claims for His revelation of God just this very exemption from the law of transience. "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever."[2] And so too the Psalmist shows the one source and assurance of steadfastness in heaven and in earth: "O Lord, Thy Word endureth for ever in heaven; Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to another." From one generation to another; across all the unimaginable changes of the eighteen centuries; through differences of thought, and life, and fashion, and social order so vast that it seems impossible for us to give reality to the pictures of those distant days; through evil report and good report, "both hated and believed," the truth that Jesus of Nazareth stored with His disciples lives still with His own risen life. The huge shiftings of the tide of human thought may modify an indifferent expression

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 15. [2] 1 St. Pet. i. 24, 25.

here and there, or may prove that the revelation has been stretched to cover ground for which it was not meant; but the truth of God made known in Jesus Christ our Lord, very Man and very God, crucified for us, risen from the dead, ascended into heaven;—this is still, after all the ages of keen and persistent criticism, this is still the steadiest light that gladdens weary eyes and hearts; for this too has its strength of life hidden with God, and therefore dieth no more.

And lastly, in the Christian character, in the character which is formed by Christ's example and sustained by His sacraments, there is that which is not transient—which being raised from the death of sin dieth no more. "The world," says St. John, "is passing away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."—Not that there is any stability at all in us. We are frail, indeed, and faltering, and forgetful, and soon tired; we know ourselves to be capable of the worst; we are always disappointing our Lord, and even ourselves; we resolve and fail, and renew our resolution and fail again; and for all the wealth and might of grace our life is a poor and inconsistent thing. Yet never let us dare to think—no, not when we are weariest of ourselves and of our failures—that this sequence of recovery and relapse, this oscillation to and fro, is

the best that we can do, or what God looks for from us, or true to the proper characteristics of the life of grace. No; it is a risen life into which we were welcomed in our Baptism; it is the risen Lord Who comes to us in the Holy Eucharist. However the effects and manifestation of His life may be hindered and obscured by our cowardice and feebleness and sin, in itself it has no limit to its energy, it knows no doom of transience; it has the power of an endless life; it moves not to and fro between success and failure, but right on from strength to strength, from glory to glory.

So, then, let us try this Eastertide, with freshness of hope, simply to clear away, God helping us, whatever checks the free expansion of the risen life within us; whatever breaks and spoils the work of grace. We have failed, it may be, a thousand times in the years that are past; we have drifted to and fro, and hardly know whether we are any nearer the haven than we were. But it need not be so now; that is not what Christ died and rose again to win for us. We shall not be faultless in the future; but we may do better than we have done, and then better, and better still. Only let us be definite, and let us be humble; let us look right away from ourselves, right up to Him; chastened and sobered by the past, but not degraded

or despondent; dead indeed unto sin, turning our backs upon it, and resolute never to look round to it with one hankering glance; but alive unto God—alive with His own life of love, Who "being raised from the dead dieth no more;" that

> "So the procession of our life may be
> More equable, and strong, and pure, and free. . . .
> For who indeed shall his high flights sustain,
> Who soar aloft and sink not? He alone
> Who has laid hold upon that golden chain
> Of love, fast linked to God's eternal throne—
> The golden chain from heaven to earth let down,
> That we might rise by it, nor fear to sink again."[1]

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[1] R. C. Trench, "Poems," pp. 81, 82 (ed. 1874). The lines are slightly altered from their original form.

XIII.

A NEW HEART.

"But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Acts iv. 19, 20.

On the first Sunday after Easter, with all the thoughts of that surpassing day fresh in our minds, we may do well to bring home to ourselves the meaning of those thoughts in the sphere of character; to try to realize some part of that which our Lord's triumph has added to the possibilities of moral change; to think over that intensely real and practical force in human life of which St. Paul speaks as "the power of Christ's Resurrection." We are anxious, all of us, I trust, to grow purer, simpler, stronger, than we are; we feel our own weakness; we cannot forget our frequent and shameful disappointments with ourselves. What should the great truth of Easter do to reinforce the hope which those disappointments

may have threatened to impair? How should the Resurrection of Jesus Christ increase in us that strength of expectancy[1] which has, we know, so great a value in our moral and spiritual life? Why does it bid us steadily to aim high?

I. Let us seek a part of the answer to these questions by marking the change which was actually wrought in one to whom our Lord deigned specially to show Himself after He was risen. Let us set in contrast two scenes of St. Peter's life—the one before, the other after, the first Easter Day. And let us measure, in the vast change which had passed over his character, something of the power of Christ's Resurrection and of its fruits to make men other than they have been.

(*a*) And first let us look at the later of the two scenes—that in which St. Peter, with St. John, as they stand before the chief council of the Jews, speaks out to them in the words of the text. And let us try to enter into the character which those words express; the inner life and temper out of which they come.

That short, decisive speech has been called "the watchword of martyrs."[2] There is a ring of strength

[1] Cf. Phillips Brooks, "Twenty Sermons," p. 355.
[2] Cf. "The Dictionary of the Bible," vol. ii. p. 802.

and frankness in it which at once attracts us. A great choice is faced, and a distinct resolution made; there is no mistaking what these men mean; and they will not easily be moved from it. In such decisions, when they are rightly formed and loyally held, we feel a dignity and freedom which we should like to make our own; a certain high independence which may be quite consistent with true humility; a clear-sightedness and self-possession which will probably keep a man straight through the big and through the little acts of choice in which character is formed and tried and brought to light.

Thus, I think, the words at once attract us. Men may, indeed, so speak in wilfulness, or blindness, or misunderstanding; and even then there is often something that we cannot help liking in their outspoken courage, their lack of any selfish caution: but when the determination is made with all humility and reverence and thoughtfulness; when the cause is one for which a man ought to make a stand and take the risk of it; then we feel that human nature is mounting, by the grace of God, about as high as it can get in this world.

And, in this case of St. Peter and St. John, there is much to deepen and confirm the first impression which their decision makes on us. Let us try simply

to get the scene before our minds. The two Apostles are standing by themselves as prisoners before the chief council of the Jews In front of them, and on either side of them, in a semicircle, are the members of the council—about seventy in number—the most powerful, the most learned, the most famous men among their nation; men about whom they must have heard people talking ever since they were boys in their Galilæan home. Presiding over the council are Annas and Caiaphas, two hard and cruel men, who will have their own way, whatever it may cost. And here is this whole body, with all its power, and authority, and cleverness, and strength of will, set against these two fishermen, St. Peter and St. John; men without any especial learning or ability, with no influence, no friends to back them up.—The occasion of their arrest is this: there has been a great excitement in Jerusalem about their healing a lame man; every one has heard of it, is talking of it. There is no doubt these two men did the miracle; and they say plainly that it was done by the Name, the power, of Jesus of Nazareth. Now, the council hate the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. When He was on earth He would make no terms with their hypocrisy; they set themselves resolutely against Him, and He in nothing gave way to them, He showed no fear of

them; and so they "sought how they might kill Him:" they covenanted for His betrayal: they "were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified," until "Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required."—And here His Name is coming up again; men say that He is risen; that His presence, His power, is with His followers. The last error is going to be worse than the first; and the council are determined to put it down. They cannot deny the miracle; but, anyhow, they will stop the movement; they will just suppress and silence these two men who are giving them so much trouble; they will simply command them not to speak to anybody at all in the Name of Jesus. There will be no way out of that. And so the commandment is given with a sharp threat to enforce it—with all that power, anger, cruelty, and determination can do to drive it home to these men's hearts, and make them careful to obey it. And the men meet it at once with a very simple answer: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."—"In the sight of God." It is just that which makes the difference; there is an authority higher than that of this great and learned council. The Apostles have made up their minds to

live, as General Gordon used to say, "for God's view and not for man's;"[1] and they have no doubt what He would have them do, and no thought of doing anything else.

(*b*) It is a fine answer; it brings out "the heroism of faith;" the strength of those who can "endure as seeing Him Who is invisible." And now let us fasten our thoughts upon the one of the two men who answer thus—upon St. Peter;—and let us think how strange it is to listen to such words as these from his lips, and then to look back to another scene—to the last time, so far as we know, that he may have heard the voice of Annas or Caiaphas. When was that? So far as the Gospels tell us, it was on the night before the Crucifixion—that night in which he thrice denied that he had anything to do with Christ. What a wonderful contrast it is! Did ever one man bear himself so differently, and seem so altered in so short a time—in a few months? Then a maid-servant's question had frightened him; now the most peremptory orders of the whole council cannot stir in him any hesitation or alarm. Then he could not face the mere thought of having to stand with Christ in His trial; now he is quite ready to go to death simply for the Name, the work, of Christ. Then he

[1] C. G. Gordon's Letters to his Sister, p. 30.

broke a solemn promise in his terror, he needs no promise now to keep him steadfast. Then he hurried from one falsehood to another in his eagerness to get off somehow; now he looks straight out, and answers without a quiver of uncertainty, as though it could never cross his mind to say anything but the bare, clear truth, as though there really were no alternative at all to be considered.—Surely it is a most striking and splendid change that has come about in him; and if by chance there was any one there who remembered what had happened in that earlier night, the night of his Master's trial, any one who could recall his shifty, timorous denials, they must have wondered whether it really could be the same man—then so feeble and confused, now so clear and resolute.

II. Can we see at all how the change had come about? In part, I think, we can. We do know of certain events in St. Peter's life during those months which seem to explain why he was so altered. And as they are events which may more or less enter into the experience of every man, and which, whenever they come, are the secret of real strength, I will ask you to look at them for a few minutes, and to try to bear them in mind. They are four in number; they may lead us some way into the meaning of the power of Christ's Resurrection.

First, then, St. Peter had heartily repented of his sins. With bitter tears he had owned how shamefully he had fallen; he had faced his wrong-doing, and hated it, and thrown himself on the pity and the love of God; he had offered up to God the sacrifice of a broken and a contrite heart. He had not hidden or slurred over his misery; he had not made excuses for himself, or tried to get off easily; or said to himself that, after all, the other Apostles, too, forsook Christ and fled; or that Christ would have been crucified anyhow; or that, at least, he had not been as bad as Judas. No; St. Peter had not tried to make himself easy about his sin, or to forget it, or to forget God; he had gone out and wept bitterly.

And then, secondly, St. Peter, as we are reminded to-day, had seen the risen Lord. On the very day of His Resurrection, in the abundance of His love, in the swiftness of His compassion, our Lord had appeared to him. When the two disciples came back from Emmaus late on Easter Day, they found the eleven talking about it, and saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." We have no fuller record of that scene; only St. Paul once glances back to it. But we must be sure that two great things were wrought in St. Peter by his Lord's coming to him: that in his penitence he received

forgiveness for all that was past; and that he was made certain of his Saviour's everlasting love and care for him—certain of the unseen world, the resurrection of the dead, the power, the watchfulness, the pleading, of his risen Master and Redeemer. St. Peter cannot "forget that he has been purged from his old sins;" and that there is One on high Who knows him perfectly, and to Whom he can commit the keeping of his soul.

And, thirdly, St. Peter had been pointed to the work he had to do; the task that was marked with his name. His risen Lord had set him his work in life; and nothing now could matter to him in comparison with doing it. By the Sea of Tiberias Christ had charged him, with a threefold bidding, to feed and tend His flock. Though he had so failed and disappointed his Master in the past, still he was not dismissed from His service or degraded in His ministry. In the Divine long-suffering and gentleness there was a high and blessed task reserved for him; and life was worth living, or might thankfully be laid down, for that task's sake. Life was not dear to him, any more than to St. Paul, in comparison with finishing his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus.

And then, fourthly, St. Peter had received that

unspeakable gift for which all this had been the preparation—the shaping and tempering of the vessel to enshrine the treasure. At Pentecost the Holy Ghost had come, the Spirit of counsel and of ghostly strength, to enter in and dwell with him—the Spirit of truth, to make him free indeed; to fill his heart and mind; to abide "by the springs of thought and desire and action;" to teach him what really is and what is not worth caring and contending for; to show the things of this life in the light of that which is to come; to fasten deep into his being the steady conviction that there is nothing in the world so great and high as goodness.

III. Thus had St. Peter's inner life, and all his thoughts about himself and about this world, been changed since the night when he denied Christ; and it is not strange that there should have come with such a change an entire transformation of his outward bearing. He had learnt and used the grace of penitence; he had found the gift of pardon; he had seen the risen, the ever-living Lord; from Him he had received his task for life; and then the Spirit of God had come to dwell in him. It was but a fragment in the outcome of all this, that he who had been scared into falsehood by a woman's words should now stand up untroubled, to face, for Christ's sake, the worst that

the great council of the Jews could do to him. He had something else to think of, care for, live and die for, now—the joy of the forgiven; the work of Christ; the peace of God; the dawn and growth and ever-growing hope of that life which is nothing else than love. This held his heart beyond the reach of threats; this may have made it seem to him almost absurd that the rulers should think that anything which they could do could come between him and his Lord, could hinder him from speaking in the Name of Jesus. Ah! but, where it all comes home to us is in this—that there is no reason why that which made him strong and fearless should not make us strong and fearless too. How many men who make a figure in the world are a long way off being so strong and so courageous as they look! And often, surely, it is some secret sin, unrepented of, indulged, extenuated, and unpardoned, that is the reason of their inner weakness, sapping, undermining all their vigour; some unworthy aim, some hidden unreality, some moral taint, that is preparing the shameful failure, the pitiful outburst of selfishness in the time of trial. Let us, first of all, get our hearts clear with God, by the pardoning grace of Christ our Lord; let us fill our minds with this truth, that He, our risen and ascended Saviour, is ever watching us and

pleading for us; let us be sure that, whatever place we hold, He has a bit of work for us to do, by the example, at all events, of a pure and dutiful and humble life; let us open out our hearts to the power and the guidance of the indwelling Spirit, (remembering again how Gordon said that it is the truth of His indwelling that makes Christianity what it is); and then we shall be gaining quite certainly more and more of that true, deep strength which is among our greatest needs in this world, and of which no man certainly can have too much; we shall be learning the secret of decision and of fearlessness in great things and in small. And so we, in our measure, may realize that new power whereby hearts are changed and characters ennobled; that power whereby many out of weakness have been made strong—even the unending power of our Saviour's Resurrection.

XIV.

THE CONTRASTS OF THIS WORLD

"Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

ST. LUKE xvi. 25.

THERE is something very terrible and disquieting in the bareness and unexplained brevity of these words Simply and abruptly they tell of a vast and twofold contrast, and then they leave it for us to think over; they throw on us the responsibility of finding out all that the contrast means. They are spoken in that hidden world where the souls of men wait for the day of judgment; where they receive already some forecast of the lot which in this life they have chosen for themselves. Already the hard and stubborn and relentless selfishness of the rich man is passing on to its inevitable issue. To the end and in the end he has cast love away from him; he has destroyed his own capacity for it; and now the mysterious

terror of everlasting lovelessness is seizing on his heart, and across the great fixed gulf he cries for help. And out of the light and peace that he has ever spurned there comes a voice which throws him back upon the witness of memory. Memory will be heard now; there is nothing now to confuse or drown her voice; he must remember the contrast which in this world was thrust upon him day after day, and ever thrust aside—the contrast between his life on earth and that of the beggar whom he sees far off in the rest of Paradise. "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." It seems to be implied that as he recalls that earlier contrast he will know that the later is by no arbitrary verdict, no merely external law; he will see where he began to be what now he is; how he formed and hardened the character which is now his scourge and torment; how all light and love and life died utterly out of his selfish, pitiless heart.

It is a terrible thought that is thus urged upon us on this First Sunday after Trinity.[1] Perhaps it is meant to teach us, with merciful sternness, to keep

[1] On which Sunday this sermon was preached in the Cathedral Church of Christ, in Oxford, at a College Service.

fast hold of that wondrous manifestation, that supreme and all-transforming gift of love of which we have been thinking, through the course of the Christian year up to the height of Whitsuntide. By the fearful picture of a loveless soul God would teach us something of the greatness of the work of His grace, of the blessing of His Holy Spirit's presence. Fear may keep us within the range of love; that selfishness may not cast out love, but love in the end may cast out fear. So let us think of this great contrast, while we have time to learn whatever lessons it has to teach; time to let it tell, as God would have it tell, upon our lives and characters.

I. (*a*) "Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things." In its simplest form the abruptness of the contrast comes before us every day. We can hardly walk out of Oxford without seeing in its poorer streets, and down alleys poorer still, the manifold tokens of the wretchedness in which Lazarus and his like drag out their comfortless days. Very likely we have grumbled at the dreariness and uncomeliness of the bit of the town through which we hurry to the river, or the hills; but we have not realized, and perhaps we have hardly tried to think, what it would be to spend day after day and year after year, ill fed and

ill clothed, in the gloom and noise and dirt of an overcrowded house down one of those side courts. To toil on and on at the same monotonous work, with no expectation of any change or brightening of one's lot; to wake morning after morning to the same dragging anxieties, the same hungry needs, the same inevitable vexations; never to have a holiday, never to gain a step, never to know anything like a real intensity of pleasure;—what a tremendous gap there is between such a lot and that which has been given to all of us! Doubtless social science can account for the inequality, and trace its laws; but that does not change the moral significance, the impressiveness, the pathos, of the facts—any more than the lightning loses its grandeur and terror because we were told that the storm was coming across the Atlantic. Doubtless, again, the poor have, by God's grace, most wondrous and beautiful alleviations of their lot; and there are many men who, by idleness, or vanity, or ill-temper, or hypochondria, make themselves far more wretched in their abundance than Lazarus ever was in his want. But still, for all that, there the contrast is; we know that nothing really strips it of its meaning, or warrants our ignoring it: and probably it is by the conditions of our birth that we are on one side rather than the other; it is by no atom of merit on

our part that we in our lifetime are receiving our good things, while Lazarus receives evil things.

(*b*) But the contrast on which the text fastens our thoughts goes far deeper than the outward conditions of the bodily life. It is hard for us, with every opportunity of intellectual development lavished upon us, to think enough of the real suffering that is sometimes borne by those who are cut off from all such opportunities. We can hardly imagine the wistful envy with which some of the poor wonder how we can so much neglect what they so hopelessly covet. Now and then a poor man struggles out through all his hindrances, and the artist, the poet, the naturalist, the mathematician, forces his way above the obscurity and poverty in which he was born, and finds the joy of using the great gift which God has given him. But more often the hope dies down under the grim, exacting demands of the poor man's life. "A first effect of poverty," it has been truly said, "is the confiscation of a man's best time and thought, from sheer necessity, to the task of providing food and clothing for himself and his family."[1] Slowly the vision of that which he knows he might be is darkened by the relentless drudgery for bare life; the consciousness of power turns, perhaps,

[1] H. P. Liddon's "University Sermons," second series, p. 286.

to fruitless bitterness; the power itself grows weak and dull; and a mind that, with one-tenth of our opportunities, might have entered further and mounted higher than the best of us into all the glories of literature or of art, a mind that might have found in the intellectual life a joy we never dream of, and enriched and gladdened all men with its work, settles down into the dreariness of unused gifts, the cruel restlessness of a misdirected life. Yes, in the conditions of intellectual growth as well as in those of bodily comfort we are bound to remember that we in our lifetime are receiving our good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things.

(*c*) Ah! but there is yet another sphere of contrast in comparison with which the opportunity or impossibility of mental culture is a very little thing. Happily, it is not a sphere in which the same characters always remain on the same sides of the contrast. No; when we come to think of that which really most of all makes life worth living—when we come to think of the blessing of home love—we may often find that Lazarus is richer far than Dives. And yet there are especial risks besetting the growth of love and gentleness in the crowded homes of the very poor; it is not easy, it is sometimes terribly difficult, for them to guard those delicate, ennobling,

purifying, hallowing influences to which we owe, perhaps, by God's mercy, whatever is best and most hopeful in our characters. But, at all events, whether we think of rich or poor, there is this tremendous and all-affecting contrast in men's lives—that some live in the abundance of love and friendship, while others hardly, it may be, know one face that grows brighter when they come, one voice that has a glad or a tender tone reserved for them, one heart that would feel desolate if they were taken away. Yes, these are the poor indeed, those are really rich beyond all words; and this is the strangest inequality in all the unequal distribution of good and evil in this world. What have we ever done, that we should know that highest theme of thanksgiving—

> "Blessings of friends, which to our door
> Unask'd, unhoped, have come;
> And choicer still, a countless store
> Of eager smiles at home"?[1]

Surely it is a chastening thought that here too, while we are thus enriched, there are others who, in their lonely or darkened lives, hardly find one touch of friendship or of love.

II. "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil

[1] J. H. Newman, "Verses on Various Occasions," p. 42

things." As we try to enter into the great, deep contrasts of the several conditions under which men pass through this world to that which is beyond, can we see at all what bearing this thought should have on our life? It bears, of course, the obvious lesson of humble and sincere thanksgiving for all that has been given us to enjoy; and it also plainly demands that we should be ever watchful and eager to do all we can to help and cheer in any possible way those who lack so much that gladdens our days. But it should have, I think, another and perhaps a wider influence on our minds and our hearts. Let me try to speak of it.—These astounding contrasts, these vast inequalities, after all that we can do or say to alleviate or to account for them, remain as a great and ultimate fact in human life. They have their place side by side with sorrow, with suffering, with death. They are among the solemn presences, as it were, before which we have to play our part. We may forget them, or ignore them, or explain them away, or disparage their importance, if we will; we have that fatal power of inattention; we can accustom ourselves to any strangeness of neglect, as the soldiers in the Crimea learnt to sleep beside the guns that were being fired. Dives used that power of inattention; he refused to think about

facts which threatened to make an unwelcome demand on him; and because he deliberately wished it, the facts receded, probably, from his mind in this world; but only to meet him again in the day of reckoning. For of every great fact in our life this is true: "Neglectum sui ulciscitur."—But, on the other hand, we may, God helping us, steadily and faithfully and humbly face these strange, inexplicable, silent witnesses of our life; we may now, "while we have time," remember; we may bear in mind these pathetic contrasts as characteristic features of the scene in which we have to do what good we can for a few years. And then quite surely they will tell upon our character, upon our estimate of life, our conception of its meaning, our use of the present, our purpose in the future. They will make it impossible for us to think of this world as a place laid out for our amusement or self-display; they will help us, as we become men, to put away childish things; they will, as tragedy of old was said to do, purify in us the passions of pity and of fear; teaching us, at all events, not to be too ready to pity ourselves, and not to fear when fear is vile or cowardly.[1] They will show us the real vulgarity of a luxurious life; they will defy us to go on living only for pleasure

[1] Cf. note [2] on p. 64.

when others are living—as it might almost seem—only for pain; to go on loitering or trifling in a world that is so grim and stern for others. We shall grow more reverent, more humble, more anxious and strenuous to do all we can of whatever work Almighty God has given us to do; and then, perhaps, He may show us more to do, and, it may be, give us more to suffer in this world. And so, since with Him all things are possible, He may save us out of all the perils of a life that lacks the unchosen discipline of want, the severity of undisguised compulsion; and hereafter we may remember, with wonder and abasement, but, by His mercy, without utter terror and confusion, that in this life we had so many privileges, and so strange a wealth of the opportunities for happiness.

XV.

HUMILITY AND ASPIRATION.[1]

"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?"

Ps. viii. 4.

To live, or even to stay for a week or two, in a remarkable place, ought not to be without some effect upon one's character, one's ways of thought and conduct. A man must be, for instance, grievously absorbed either in himself or in his work, to be wholly unchanged by his first visit to London or to Rome; to receive into his inner life, to work into his own views and habits, nothing out of all that is distinctively wonderful, or glorious, or pathetic in such cities—in their present aspect or their past history. The inmost depths of character, the efforts and struggles through which it is moving in one

[1] This sermon was preached at Oxford, in the Cathedral, at a service attended by many of the University Extension Students during their summer meeting.

direction or another, growing better or growing worse, cannot, indeed, be determined or controlled by any such external influence; a man who habitually pleases himself will become continually more selfish and sordid even among the most noble and beautiful conditions which nature, or history, or art can furnish; and, on the other hand, any one who will try each day to live for the sake of others, will grow more and more gracious in thought and bearing, however dull and even squalid may be the outward circumstances of the soul's probation. So Tito Melema sinks lower and lower amidst all the glory and the delicacy of Florence at its height of beauty; and so Thomas à Kempis rises ever nearer to the perfect life in the monotony of his seventy years at one poor monastery, amidst the hard features and the dull plains of Holland. No outward conditions can touch the divergence of such lives. But if we, by God's grace, are willing, famous cities may do something for us, just as music may; they may bring great thoughts before us, and speak to us with a strong appeal; they may bear into our hearts some faint, indefinite suggestion of the greatness, the sincerity, the generosity, the faith of those who made them what they are; they may, perhaps, make us ashamed of ourselves; they may leave with us a picture, a

translation, as it were, into a new language, of that inner quality, that moral excellence, which their outward beauty or dignity may seem to resemble, or even to express. So, then, let us try to think of a certain influence, perhaps the chief and the most helpful influence, which Oxford might exert on those who live in it, and on those who visit it with something deeper than a hurried curiosity.

I. It has been well said by a great writer that "in the course of his history man has by turns depreciated and exaggerated his true importance among the creatures of God. Sometimes he has made himself the measure of all things, as though his was the sovereign mind, and the Creator a being whose proceedings could be easily understood by him. Sometimes," on the other hand, "man has appeared to revel in self-depreciation, placing himself side by side with or below the beasts that perish, insisting on his animal kinship with them, and anxiously endeavouring to ignore or deny all that points to a higher element in his life."[1] We can trace, I think, these two contrasted tendencies of thought in the theories which have been formed about man's nature, and his place in the universe. But to most of us the same contrast may come home more vividly and

[1] H. P. Liddon, "Christmastide Sermons," p. 129.

practically in two strangely diverse temptations to think wrongly about ourselves and our work in life. Surely we are apt to be very inconsistent in the view we take of our place and purpose in the world; in some ways vastly exaggerating our importance, and in others failing of the reverence we owe to ourselves. Sometimes a man seems to think of the whole world as revolving round his life, and measures everything with reference to his own wishes and opinions; and sometimes he is content to drift along as though he had no distinct power of choice and will—as though he could only go where the current and the eddies carry him. Sometimes he seems unable to imagine that the lives, the feelings, the convictions, of others can possibly mean as much to them as his do to him; and sometimes he hardly seems to have a conviction in him, but yields to any pressure that is on him, and calls himself the victim of circumstances. Sometimes he speaks as though his knowledge were certain and his decisions infallible; sometimes as though he could know nothing at all of that on which all knowledge depends. Sometimes he seems to himself remarkable, exempt from the obvious defects he sees in others, and incapable of their blunders and misdoings; at other times he practically takes the poorest view of his own endowments; he thinks that it is of no use

for him to aim high, or to attempt a noble life; that he may make himself easy on a low level, or a down-grade; that there are temptations which he cannot withstand, and sins which he will never overcome; that people must take him as he is, and not expect too much of him.—Surely it is a curious and not uncommon inconsistency; and perhaps we all, in some degree, in some aspects of our life, fall into it: we think of ourselves both more highly and more meanly than we ought to think.

II. To think of one's self at once too highly and too meanly, to be at once too confident and too faint-hearted, at once to exaggerate and to ignore one's own importance,—there should be, I think, in Oxford helpful influences against both elements in this complex temptation. For, first, it ought surely to be difficult to think one's self remarkable, to think that one has attained any right to rest on one's achievements, or to be self-confident in such a place as this. The surpassing beauty, the quiet nobleness, the venerable antiquity of Oxford ought to check us like a living and a reverend presence; it might make us lower, as it were, the tone of our voices, if, in the din of a competitive age, we have grown apt to talk too positively; it might remind us sometimes that we "speak under correction."—For there

has been so much of greatness here. The succession of great founders and builders and benefactors that comes before us as we pass from college to college; the great statesmen who have been trained here; the great teachers who from Oxford have moved men's hearts and minds, and turned the broad stream of human thought; the great students who, as was said of one of the greatest and most modest of them, have searched into all learning, and come to nothing that was too hard for their understanding;[1] the great master-minds that have seen and grasped the truth, where others could only grope among details; and, above all, the "holy and humble men of heart;" —these confer on Oxford something which seems to lift the standard of life and work, and to silence the words of praise and confidence which we are apt to use so lightly.—Ah! but then, it would be a poor result if we stopped there; if the greatness of the past served only to dwarf the present; if the impression of distinction and grandeur simply made us feel how very poor and rudimentary and feeble are our best efforts and our utmost attainments; if the only outcome of visiting the Bodleian Library were to realize the truth that one has virtually read nothing at all. But while the influence of Oxford ought, indeed, to

[1] Clement VIII., concerning Hooker, in Walton's "Life of Hooker."

chasten us and to repress all rising of self-confidence, certainly it should also quicken us; it should rebuke all our faint-heartedness and failure of aspiration. For our lives are enriched by all this labour and bounty of the past; and therefore we must use them reverently, with a high standard of unselfish effort. More or less, directly or indirectly, consciously and unconsciously, we all are using day after day that which the great workers of past ages won and stored for us. In the material surroundings of our life; in the knowledge of nature's laws and the power which that knowledge gives; in the thoughts that glow with an unfading brightness; in the visible forms of beauty and the recorded examples of goodness;—in all these ways we are helped forward and urged upward by the greatness that has been. Oxford may well call us to remember how, as Dr. Whewell finely said, our education rests on "the results of ancient triumphs of man's spirit over the confusion and obscurity of the aspects of the external world; and even over the waywardness and unregulated impulses of his own nature, and the entanglements and conflicts of human society."[1]

There is hardly any duty which we may not do the better for realizing that great inheritance of

[1] "Lectures on Education," p. 19.

which Oxford may especially remind us. For some of the commonest faults of thought and work are those which come from thinking too poorly of our own lives, and of that which must rightly be demanded of us. A high standard of accuracy, a chivalrous loyalty to exact truth, generosity to fellow-workers, indifference to results, distrust of all that is showy, self-discipline and undiscouraged patience through all difficulties,—these are among the first and greatest conditions of good work; and they ought never to seem too hard for us if we remember what we owe to the best work of bygone days.

III. "Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" Thus may a great historic city point us, if we are willing and humble, just a little way towards the true answer to that deep question; thus may it, perhaps, suggest to us some thought both of the littleness and of the greatness of our separate lives.[1] But it cannot take us very far; it cannot do much to keep us in order, or to control our vanity and wilfulness and self-pleasing. We know that; and Oxford has, it must be feared, like other great places, seen enough both of self-assertion and of indolence, both of empty pride and of wasted opportunities, to forbid our ever thinking

[1] Cf. J. H. Newman's "Sermons for the Seasons," p. 341

that even the most gracious of external influences can discipline men's characters or guard a great heritage from their misuse. We need, indeed, something far more penetrating and arresting than historical associations and visible beauty. We need the knowledge of God, and of that which He made us to be, and has made possible for us; we need, if we are really to understand and to employ our lives aright, the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ. All that is noblest in history and art may be lavished, often has been lavished, in the circumstances of a life that has only seemed to sink the faster into the depths of misery, the decadence of vanity and sloth. It is only as we take to our hearts that astounding disclosure which God has made to us of Himself, and of His will and love for us, that we may really overcome the temptation to think too highly or too poorly of our lives. We can trace the two great lines of that disclosure of man's true place with increasing clearness in the Old Testament; they are seen at once in the record of creation, where he who is formed of the dust of the ground is yet made in the image of God; they meet in the question of the text. For as the Psalmist looks at the magnificence, the purity, the splendour, of the starry heavens, as he thinks of the glorious majesty of their Creator, as he realizes

in immeasurable contrast the littleness and poverty and feebleness of man, he yet knows that this is only half the truth; since human life is lifted out of all its outward insignificance by the Creator's love and care; since in His wondrous mercy He is mindful of the sons of men, and visits them in tenderness and blessing. As man seems to sink towards nothingness before the infinite greatness of Almighty God, he is raised again and ennobled beyond all thought or hope by the assurance that God loves and pities him, and has a purpose and a work for his frail, fleeting life. —But it is only in the fulness of time, only in the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, that the true place and worth of every human soul is perfectly revealed. For then at length is seen the glory of God; since all the marvels of creation, all the splendour and surprise of earth and sky, far less disclosed His glory than did the Cross of Christ; since in His willing death we may see at length the greatness of God's love. "God so loved the world:" there is the true unveiling of Himself; there, where "the love o'ertops the might." And we have far, far more cause to feel our meanness, our base ingratitude, our blank and shameful failure, before that disclosure of perfect love and holiness and self-surrender than in all the splendour of the greatest pageant that art or nature

can display; since in contrast with that sight the misery of our selfish hearts breaks in on us at last. Ah! but with that sharp conviction comes another voice of truth to banish all despondency and faint-heartedness; for it is to draw us to Himself that He hangs there: "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." His Death and Resurrection are not only the revelation, they are also the triumph, of His love; that love which His grace is ever ready to bear even into our unworthy hearts, that we may find, in humbly following the blessed steps of His most holy life, the true greatness of that nature which He deigned to wear on earth—that human nature which He has exalted now to the right hand of the Majesty on high.

XVI.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF INHERITANCE.

"Freely ye have received, freely give."
ST. MATT. x. 8.

I. THE first reference of these words seems to be to the supernatural gifts of healing power which the twelve Apostles had received from our Blessed Lord. He, to Whom the Father had eternally given "to have life in Himself," had imparted to His chosen servants that life-giving energy which was His essentially. "He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." This transcendent grant they had received freely; they had in no way earned it or achieved it for themselves; it had come to them as spontaneously as the rain falls upon the drooping plant; and it must be used as it had come—spontaneously, ungrudgingly, without demand or expectation of a recompense. There must be no exacting insistence upon merit or upon gratitude; they must not look

upon the powers they had received as conferring greatness or importance on themselves, or as convertible into so much of thanks and popularity and influence, or as enabling them to enforce their own particular views of what men and women ought to be. Freely they had received, and freely they were to give; with a pure regard to the will of God; with a humble care not to thrust in their own claims between the work of His mercy and the thankfulness of those to whom they were allowed to bear it. Doubtless the warning was needed then: how greatly needed we may feel, if we venture to wonder what use Judas Iscariot made of the beneficent powers he had freely received. It had been needed constantly in the past; and the neglect of it had shut out Moses from the promised land, because at Meribah "he spake unadvisedly with his lips," and did not sanctify the Giver of all good in the eyes of the children of Israel. It is needed at all times, even in its first and plainest application; for I suppose that there has never been a period when even the highest and most mysterious gifts that issue from the love of God have been safe from the abuse of greed and wilfulness, of lust for praise or power.

But the words are general in form; they have a bearing far beyond the sphere of those distinctive

gifts which God entrusts to the stewards of His mysteries. And one plain lesson which they teach us all is this—that a great duty rests on us in regard to our use of all that manifold heritage which has come to us so freely and so generously, unearned, unasked, from the toil, and patience, and wisdom, and bounty of past ages. It is a lesson of which we ought to think at the beginning of a week still nominally concerned with the commemoration of founders and benefactors.[1] Let us for a few minutes fasten our thoughts upon it.

II. "Freely ye have received." Directly or indirectly very many of us are debtors to the splendid generosity of those who long ago devoted their wealth to the glory of God in the advancement of religion and learning. Some of us may feel that through every stage in our life since childhood we have owed some privilege to their liberality; and most of us, perhaps, either for ourselves, or through the help, the training, the deeper thoughts and higher aims that others have received in school or college life, have had some share from the bounty of the past. And whatsoever has thus come to us we have received as a free gift. Men gave of old with large-hearted, unexacting

[1] This sermon was preached at Oxford, in the Cathedral, on "Commemoration Sunday."

liberality; they cared and planned and spent for those who might never think of them, who could never show them gratitude or make them any recompense, save by their prayers. From some who have "left a name behind them, that their praises might be reported;" and from some who have no memorial, whose names are forgotten where their work lives on—the broad stream of bounty has come down to us.—There seems a curious contrast between the almost morbid restlessness with which many men are anxious to be or to seem quit of any obligation to a living benefactor, and the uninquiring acquiescence with which they will settle down to enjoy the splendid gifts of those who have passed away. It would be difficult to measure how much harder, poorer, darker, our lives would be if men had been in bygone ages narrow or cold in giving; if the great builders had stayed their hands at that which would do for their own need or last out their days; if all had been timidly bounded by

> "The lore
> Of nicely-calculated less or more;"[1]

if the enthusiasm of a great conception had not been allowed its liberty. Freely we have received; nothing

[1] Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Sonnets, "Inside of King's College Chapel, Cambridge."

was asked of us as we entered into all this heritage of help and beauty; we found the homes of worship, the facilities and encouragements of learning, ready for our use. Freely we have received; and our Saviour teaches us how to show our gratitude for this ungrudged and unconditioned largess. We, in our turn, must freely give. Without looking for requital, without making bargains, without any thought of recognition or gratitude, we must bear our part in that great chain of giving which binds age to age, that tradition of generosity which looks like the sunny side of the road in the course of human affairs. Freely we must give, for the good of those whom we shall never see, and who will never know of our existence; those for whom, in distant lands or ages, our gifts may, perhaps, help to do something like what the gifts of the past have done for us. Surely the best "commemoration of founders and benefactors," here or elsewhere, is to ask ourselves what we can do, with some approach to their ungrudging and unbargaining spirit, for those who as yet have been left destitute of the wealth that has so freely come to us. And if, amidst the expense and pleasure of this week, it occurs to any one that a Latin speech, not always listened to or understood by all, is rather a poor acknowledgment of all that Oxford owes to the great

givers of former generations, then the words of the text may point to a clear way of commemorating them more worthily:—"Freely give:" try to learn more of their bountiful temper, their far-sighted, open-handed care for others; see what you can do to keep up their work.

Freely we have received our opportunities of education: what are we doing in our turn for the education of the poor? Freely we have received these "monuments of love divine," our churches and cathedrals, rich with the living thoughts, the lingering prayers, of bygone times: what are we doing to provide even the simplest buildings that are needed for God's service in the quickly spreading suburbs of our huge, grim towns? Freely we have received the tradition of revealed truth: what are we doing for the proffer of that truth to those who, at home and abroad, are living, sinning, suffering, and dying without any knowledge of the love of God made manifest in the Incarnate Son? It is in those who are really caring for such works as these that the wise and generous temper of our founders and benefactors lives among us still; it is they who are true to the traditions of the past, and to the best part of all that Oxford means. In ventures and efforts such as those of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, the

Oxford Mission to Calcutta, the Oxford House in Bethnal Green, the Christ Church Mission at Poplar, the spirit from which we ourselves so freely have received still struggles on to deal, in the hopefulness of faith, with the vast needs of the present, and to make such scanty provision as it can for the incalculable demands and difficulties of the future. Yes; and surely it may come to pass, in the swift changes through which history works out the will of Him Who "putteth down one and setteth up another," that, when the greatness of Oxford is a mere story of the past, the high purpose of our founders may be living still, and their devotion to God's glory may be bearing its true fruit in some distant field, in India or elsewhere, as the Church of Christ rises in the old way, by the self-sacrifice of those who love not their life even unto death.

III. "Freely ye have received, freely give." We must not limit our application of the words to such benefits as have been placed within our reach, or brought indirectly to bear on our lives, out of the liberality of founders and benefactors. In far wider ways we owe more than we can ever tell to the large-heartedness of our forefathers. Other men have laboured, and we have entered into their labours. Think of all the toil, and patience, and self-discipline, and per-

severance of artists and students and artificers in age after age, that have gone to make possible or conceivable the things that we may take for granted; the most ordinary comforts or adornments of our lives. Think of the vast suffering that went before the discovery of the simplest laws by which our health is guarded or regained. Or think of that which has been finely described as "the cost of moral movement;" "the immense cost, the appalling severity of the effort which has been spent on lifting men's spiritual faculties from the state of the savage to the condition in which we find them in ourselves to-day."[1] Freely we have received the outcome of all this; and if there is any sense of chivalry or of justice in us, we cannot realize at how vast a cost we have been thus endowed, enabled, taught, and then let the giving halt at our unproductive, comfortable lives.—But, above all, let us try to imagine what others may have had to bear that the faith of Christ and the ministry of His sacraments might be handed on to us in unimpaired integrity. We are always talking of the difficulties, the anxieties, the perplexities of our day in matters of religion. And doubtless our difficulties are real and serious; they are likely to test our strength of character and our

[1] H. S. Holland, "Logic and Life," p. 79.

patience, likely to prove what we are made of, before we have done with them. But, can we imagine that it ever was an easy thing to be a Christian? Surely all the generations of the past have had their trials of faith; their difficulties, practical or theoretical, to deal with; their especial exercise for trust in God, for loyalty through dark times, for resolute tenacity of truth, even when it has looked fragmentary and disappointing. There has never been a time when doubts had not a fair chance of wresting the faith of Christ out of the grasp of the prayerless, the faint-hearted, the impatient, the double-minded, and the undisciplined. But by the strong grace of God, in one generation after another, His servants have been of a widely different character; they have endured as seeing Him Who is invisible; they have fought the good fight against all that, within them or without, threatened to drag them back from their Redeemer; and so the faith has come down to our age. Freely we have received what all that moral effort has preserved; and can we shrink, ungenerous, soon wearied, or soon frightened, from the demand that the maintenance of our own faith may make in our day? It is but the old demand in a new form; and there will have been grave fault somewhere if, when we should freely give to those who come after us, freely give

the heritage which we received, we have to say that, somehow, it has slipped from our hold. Let us see to this, at least, that that which has come down to us through centuries of such endurance shall not, by any lack of prayer, of trust, of self-control, self-sacrifice, and patience on our part, be wasted in our hands; and then, we may thankfully believe, Almighty God will see to it that we shall not have less to give than that which we have, by His unspeakable mercy, received through the patience of the saints and the steadfast wisdom of the Spirit-bearing Church.

XVII.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STRENGTH.

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak."

ROM. xv. 1.

I. LET us try to enter into the position which has been under St. Paul's consideration when he writes these words.

(*a*) The peace and welfare of the Church at Rome had been imperilled by the divergence of two groups of Christians in certain details of practice. It was a divergence such as might naturally result when a new principle, telling with incalculable energy for change on thought and conduct, had been welcomed by a number of men who differed widely in calibre and temperament and training. The revelation of Jesus Christ and of the grace and truth that came by Him held within it a power to make all things new; and as the touch of faith released that power, it must often have been found that the acceptance of Christianity involved far more than had been at first

disclosed. To be a Christian; to believe that the Eternal and Almighty Son of God had taken to Himself a human nature, and lived and died on earth and risen from the dead; to go about one's work each day in constant reliance on His strength, knowing that He was looking on, wondering whether that very day He might come back to judge the world, to judge one's self;—this could not but affect profoundly the meaning of all earthly things, the drift and intensity of all hopes and fears and cares and efforts. And as the Holy Spirit bore deeper and more fully into a man's soul the life of Christ, with all its surprising consequences of conviction and of duty, many forces which had claimed some influence or lordship over him would fall back, relaxing their hold and relinquishing their pretensions. We may know how conventional axioms are swept aside in moments of sudden passion or enthusiasm; we may know how passions stronger than any conventionality may yield up their tyranny in those rare cases when a man knows, with undimmed and unenfeebled intellect, that he has but a few hours more to live. But it was with a broader, calmer, surer onset, that the truth of Christ advanced to vindicate its empire, and to free the hearts of men from all narrow, timid deference to merely outward rules. For the motive force, the

guiding light, of the Christian life left no place or meaning for such soulless precautions: they would look like street-lamps left burning by mistake at mid-day; they could add nothing to the amplitude of radiance which Christ was pouring into the new-born souls of His redeemed.

(*b*) But to part with outward rules, however unspiritual and however conventional they may be, requires a certain force of character, a certain power of self-realization, which is not found in all men. For outward and particular rules, if sometimes they are irksome, are often comfortable and reassuring: they seem to save men trouble, to leave less room for uncertainty, to lighten the burden of responsibility at a moderate cost: men are told what is asked of them, and can, if they will, be sure that they have rendered it. What the strong may feel as a restriction the weak may welcome as a safeguard; and there is need of courage and enterprise to venture beyond the tutelage of external directions into the higher sphere of life, where the challenge of God's infinite love is the one principle of guidance, and His absolute perfection is the source and strength of every law. And so, as the call to substitute the obedience of faith for attention to rules came home to the conscience of Christians individually, it brought to light some deep

differences of character and temperament; men fell apart from one another according as they were or were not able to welcome such a call, to commit themselves to such a venture, to trust themselves, God helping them, in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. There were some who, in the sanctified independence of a strong character, sprang at once to realize the privilege and the demand of the new life: risen with Christ, they looked to Him alone; from Him, from Him alone, by whatsoever influence, through whatsoever channels of communication He might be pleased to use, must come the law whereby they must be judged, even the royal law of liberty; to them the narrow and unquickening rules by which men crept about the world seemed somewhat as our roads and railways may look to the swallow while, in obedience to the impulse God has given him, he wings his way through the broad spaces of the sky towards the ever-growing light and warmth he loves. But there were others who had not strength of character or firmness of self-realization to renounce all deference to those laws whose limit of demand they could exactly measure, and with which they could conform so perfectly as to feel a sense of security if not of self-satisfaction. It does not seem that these weak brethren in the Church at Rome denied any truth

which the strong believed; they were not like the Judaizers of the Galatian Church; but belief meant less to them, because, if one may so speak, they meant less to themselves; they had not the moral vigour to enter on their heritage of liberty; they were like the timid convalescent who shrinks from the ventures to which his doctor encourages him, and keeps up the precautions and the dietary of his illness long after they have become, to say the least, wholly unnecessary for him. Whether it was from dread of even the slightest pollution by any unconscious contact with a heathen sacrifice, or from an idea of some intrinsic unfitness in certain kinds of food, or from a scrupulous anxiety to secure the merit of being on the safe side, we cannot tell; but there were Christians at Rome who persisted in carefully submitting their life to rules which they had learnt elsewhere than in the school of Christ, and in hanging back from the liberty to which He called them. And so there had arisen that divergence and contrast, that danger of mutual misunderstanding, with which St. Paul deals in the fourteenth chapter of this Epistle: one man believed that he might eat all things; another, who was weak, ate only herbs: one man esteemed one day above another; another man esteemed every day alike.

II. Such is the difficulty before St. Paul, and he

deals with it on principles of wide and lasting import. He has, you will remember, a word of warning for each of the two divergent groups: "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not: and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth." He, on the one hand, whose swiftness of apprehension and strength of grasp and moral energy enable him to realize how a single and absolute allegiance to Christ lifts a man above the reach of this world's arbitrary and traditional rules, must have no thought of scorn or ridicule for the backward but well-meaning brother who, with perhaps an equal desire to devote himself wholly to Christ's service, is still of opinion that such rules ought not to be disregarded. And he, on the other hand, as he keeps his rules and eats his dinner of herbs, must not be thinking any hard things of those who with an unhesitating conscience live a less restricted life. The reason for the latter part of this counsel, for the Apostle's warning to the weak, is simple. That unnecessary censure of other men's ways is an ignorant and irreverent meddling with the Divine prerogative of judgment; it is an intrusion of ill-informed opinion where only the unerring voice of Christ should speak: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth."

The principle here is clear for us all, however reluctant we may be in realizing it; however hard it may be to recollect that one's impertinent fault-finding with one's neighbours simply adds to one's own unsightliness before the Judge of all. But for the strong, for him who has insight and confidence to commit himself wholly to the law of liberty, St. Paul has a more complex task, involving that great and characteristic principle of Christianity which is enunciated in the text: and it is of this task, of this principle, that I would try especially to speak.

His words recall the closely parallel passage in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. The strong, he recognizes, may be rightly free from any scruples of his own; but the very love which gives him freedom binds him to be considerate for the scruples of the weak. The weak man is like one with a delicate constitution who may easily be encouraged to imprudence; and the strong must use for his sake a care which he need never use for his own. "For," it has been well said, "there is a tyranny which even freedom may exercise, when it makes us intolerant of other men's difficulties."[1] And weakness itself is a source of real difficulties, and a claim therefore for

[1] B. Jowett, "St. Paul's Epistles to Thessalonians, Romans, and Galatians," ii. 345

forbearance and for considerateness. The weak and scrupulous brother may be distressed and wounded by the inconsiderate display of liberty; or he may be led on by the force of example, if not of ridicule, to venture beyond the sanction of his own conscience, and thus made bold to do what in itself may be indifferent but for him is wrong, since all the while his moral sense is witnessing against it. Well, then, if one is strong, to be always clutching one's liberty, to look at it as a prize to be held tight, a right to be asserted, a flag to be displayed at all hazards and all times; to forfeit sympathy that one may evince superiority; to prove one's own advance at the expense of others' welfare, is a preposterous inversion of the whole order of a Christian life. Strength and freedom are indeed great gifts; and when a man has realized that they are his, and has thanked God for them, let him turn them to a really great use. Let him exercise and prove them by stooping down and taking upon himself the burdens of the weak; putting himself in the place of the weak; going back, as it were, to take his stand with them, to stay with them till he can help them onward; divesting himself, not indeed of the very strength and freedom which belong to him as a member of Christ, but of the assertion and mani-

festation and enjoyment of them: controlling and humbling himself for the sake of others (yes, it is the one sufficient task for the strong and free), controlling and humbling himself so to live as though, in these regards, his freedom and his strength were bounded by the limits of their weakness. So may he make known to them the reality of that grace which makes him free, and will in due time free them also: so may his life be used to help them, as God bears into their hearts the beauty and the strength of love, teaching them through His servant's humility and unselfishness what is the central splendour of that life, of which the liberty that men discuss is but an incidental trait. For the kingdom of God—that invasion and conquest and transfiguration of this life by the powers of the life to come—does not consist, and is not realized and displayed, in setting men free from this or that external rule, however justly such freedom may belong to the children of the kingdom; but in righteousness and peace and joy; in a reverent and generous recognition of one's *duty* towards others; in that *tranquillity* which love is for ever tending to increase around and in the soul it rules; and in that quiet and steadfast glow of *joy* which neither pain, nor poverty, nor weariness, nor injustice can overwhelm—the joy which in its triumph over anxiety and sin tells from whence

it comes. In these things let the strong evince the reality of his life of faith; thus let him employ and prove that freedom which he has found only that he may exercise it in self-surrender, that he may bring to the work of God and the service of man the offering of a free heart.

III. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." Let me briefly speak of three points in regard to the ethical principle which is thus, in its widest form, declared.

(*a*) First, let us realize how great and how unlike the ordinary ways of men is the demand it makes. There is nothing which seems to try men's patience and good temper more than feebleness: the timidity, the vacillation, the conventionality, the fretfulness, the prejudices of the weak; the fact that people can be so well-meaning and so disappointing,—these things make many men impatient to a degree of which they are themselves ashamed. But it is something far more than patience and good temper towards weakness that is demanded here. It is that the strong, in whatsoever sphere their strength may lie, should try in silence and simplicity, escaping the observation of men, to take upon their own shoulders the burdens which the weak are bearing; to submit themselves to the difficulties amidst which the weak are stum-

bling on; to be, for their help's sake, as they are; to share the fear, the dimness, the anxiety, the trouble and heart-sinking through which they have to work their way; to forego and lay aside the privilege of strength in order to understand the weak and backward and bewildered, in order to be with them, to enter into their thoughts, to wait on their advance; to be content, if they can only serve, so to speak, as a favourable circumstance for their growth towards that which God intended them to be.[1] It is the innermost reality of sympathy, it is the very heart and life of courtesy, that is touched here: but like all that is best in moral beauty, it loses almost all its grace the moment it attracts attention. It is noblest when it is least conscious, when another's load, another's limitations, another's trials are assumed quite naturally, as a mother takes her children's troubles for her own, by the straightforward instinct of her love; it is impaired whenever the disfiguring shadow of self-consciousness has begun to creep about it; it is ruined utterly, it ceases to have any semblance of its former self, when once it has been tainted by any insolent complacency in condescension. But when it is pure and true and self-forgetful; when it

[1] Cf. "The Gifts of the Child Christ," in "Stephen Archer, and other Tales," by G. MacDonald.

is guarded by a real hatred of praise, a real joy in hiddenness; when it has no motive and no goal save love;—then, indeed, it may be the distinctive glory of the Christian character.

In strangely different ways we try sometimes to prove to others or to ourselves that we are strong: by self-assertion and positiveness, by getting our own way, by vehemence or wilfulness or diplomacy, or by standing aloof in an attitude of critical reserve. Let us try our strength where St. Paul would have it exercised, in making others' trials our own: and perhaps our first reward may be the wholesome and necessary discovery that our strength is less than we imagined. For it has been truly said that "there is no strain so continuous as that of helping the weak friend to climb. Every footstep has to be steadied as he laboriously ascends; he gets fatigued, he gets giddy, he disdains the use of the rope; perhaps he slips and falls; his constant stumbles seem to imperil our very existence; he keeps us back, he makes our progress slow; we cannot enjoy the prospect by the way, nor the delight of climbing."[1] That parable points us, I think, to the hardest task, the highest privilege that true strength of character can find. In God's service, we are taught, is perfect

[1] W. C. E. Newbolt, "The Fruit of the Spirit," pp. 58, 59.

freedom; and the ancient prayer from which those words are taken seems to say even more—that to serve Him is to reign. But there is yet a higher dignity to be found in service than either royalty or freedom, since to serve others is to help them to be free.

(*b*) Yes; for, in the second place, there is no sure way of helping others save that to which St. Paul directs us. It is an impressive part of the witness that comes to Christianity from the sphere of ethics, that if we have courage to let it lead us apart from all that we think natural and hopeful, we find that it has put us in the way to reach an end beyond our hopes, and to realize a higher nature than that which men usually call human. Christ tells us, for instance, that the meek shall inherit the earth; and we begin to see, as life goes on, that there are indeed no victories so real and sure as those which meekness wins. We are taught that we must be made perfect through suffering; and we put a very scanty meaning into the words, until some day we see a human soul ascend through pain to a dignity and beauty before which we stand abashed. "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness:"—there are no words which admit of more conclusive verification by experience than those. And so in the case of which we have been thinking: the guidance which crosses our natural impulse as to the

use of strength points us to the very secret of its worth and safety and increase. We shall not much help others to advance till we have taken our stand with them, and made their task our own. We know that well in regard to education. The man of learning, who is so engrossed in his own investigations, or so dazzled by his own brilliancy, or so anxious to make his own standpoint clear, that he forgets or fails to enter at all into his hearers' minds, may possibly impress but hardly educate them. His teaching may show, indeed, how far on he has got, and it may quicken aspiration in those who are nearest to him; but it will leave many whom he might help just where they were. To "bear the infirmities of the weak;" to learn how things may seem to them; to realize how naturally they may see but little meaning in words and arguments which study has made full of force to the teacher; to measure the possibility of misunderstanding or the range of prejudice; to recollect how easily an untrained mind confuses the relative importance of its data;—we are familiar with these conditions of all excellence in the ministry of teaching. And surely we know how in those deeper and more anxious difficulties through which we may have to fight our way, in the trials of the moral and spiritual life, if any help can come to us from others, it can only be

from those who see our troubles, not from without but from within; who with the wisdom, the simplicity, the strength of love, will come out of the sunshine to be with us in the gloom and dimness; who touch our wounds as tenderly as though their own nerves throbbed for them; who measure our fears and hindrances and sorrows not by the cold estimate of an external critic, but as they are to the heart which really has to bear them. We may be unreasonable enough in our fears, our anxiety, our faint-heartedness, our despondency, our slowness of belief; but if we are to be helped at all, it will not often be by one who stands far off and calls to us to be as rational and robust as he is; but by some one who never seems to pity us just because he stands so close beside us; some one in whom the quiet radiance of love scarcely suffers us at first to see the sustaining massiveness of strength; some one whom we can gladly trust with the knowledge of our infirmities because he never thrusts on us his own exemption from them, because when he is with us he turns all his strength and insight to the task of taking on himself the burden of our weakness.

(*c*) Lastly, let us lift our eyes to look towards Him Who is for evermore our One Supreme Example in the task thus set to love and strength. "We that are

strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." Yes, how can we evade or wonder at the claim, since He Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses; since, though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor; since we "owe everything to the self-abnegation of a Redeemer," Who, "being in the form of God," "did not cling with avidity to the prerogatives of His Divine Majesty," "but divested Himself of the glories of Heaven," and "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a Servant"? He (as has been said by a great historical and theological teacher in this University)—He accepted within the human sphere on which He entered by becoming Man "restriction, subjections, obscurations, pertaining to the position of a servant;" "as Man, He willed to live compassed with sinless infirmities, and in dependence, as to His soul's life, on the word, the will, the presence of His Father—a dependence, be it always remembered, not scenic, but genuine and actual."[1] There could be indeed "no sin in Him to become that spring of evil," which our sins so often are to us; but save in this He took His stand with us, that He might lead us to be with Him where He is. How, then, can we hang back or cling to thoughts of pride and care

[1] W. Bright, "The Incarnation," p. 277. Cf. Bishop Lightfoot on Phil. ii. 5–11

for self, if He will let us help to lead the least of all He saved a little nearer to His light by humbly trying to bear with them the burden of their weakness? It is true that His vast condescension wrought a work we cannot touch; and true again that the example of it comes to us across a great gap; for the utmost difference that there can ever be between two sinful men is as nothing in comparison with the infinite difference which for love's sake He spanned when He was made man, and hid His glory and omnipotence in weakness and in hunger, in shame and weariness, in suffering and death. Yet still across the gap we look to Him; and surely anything like self-assertion, anything like anxiety for the display and acknowledgment of our powers and position, seems a strange infatuation when we think what He forewent, how He was pleased to live for our sakes on earth. We wonder at the words He spake—words such as no other ever spake; but what can we say about the wonder of His silence, about the patient, gentle holding back of that He had to say, because men could not bear it yet? "Whence hath this Man this wisdom?" —so men asked as they listened to His teaching; but neither they nor we could ever tell the love and might of self-restraint which checked the beams of His Divine omniscience, that being very Man He might as

really grow in wisdom as in stature.[1] We mark how His almighty power issued forth to quell the storm, to heal the sick, to raise the dead; but we must not miss the majesty of hidden strength, the marvel and the teaching of His patient self-repression, as He keeps in calm abeyance that which could not but belong to Him as the Eternal and Co-equal Son of God.

"He might have reared a palace at a word,
Who sometimes had not where to lay His head:
Time was, and He Who nourished crowds with bread
Would not one meal unto Himself afford:
Twelve legions girded with angelic sword
Were at His beck, the scorned and buffeted:
He healed another's scratch, His own side bled,
Side, feet, and hands, by cruel piercings gored.
Oh, wonderful the wonders left undone!
And scarce less wonderful than those He wrought.
Oh, Self-restraint, passing all human thought,
To have all power, and be as having none!
Oh, Self-denying Love, which felt alone
For needs of others, never for its own!"[2]

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[1] Cf. Hooker, V. liv. 6. H. P. Liddon, "Bampton Lectures," p. 464.

[2] Archbishop Trench, "Poems," p. 142.

XVIII.

OLD AND YOUNG.

"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

1 St. John ii. 12-14.

I. Wherever we look in the wide scene of human life we seem to mark two elements or factors working out the Will of God. The ceaseless drama of history, however great or humble may be the stage on which we see it played, constantly betrays in its course the presence of two forces, animating the action, meeting in its critical points. Let us try, speaking broadly, to distinguish them.—On the one hand there is the force of such convictions, affections, antipathies, associations, habits of mind as belong to those who

have already given their distinctive impress to a period which is now passing away. It is not that their work, or even the greater part of their work, is done; it well may be that "they shall bring forth more fruit in their age;" and perhaps in the years that remain to them their influence may be, if they will have it so, stronger than it ever has been before. But the stage of life which bears their stamp, and in which their characteristic powers told most freely and evidently, is receding further and further into the past; and to their eyes, at all events, the retrospect of their life looks more than the prospect in this world.—Then, on the other hand, there is the force of their convictions or intentions whose distinctive work lies for the most part before them, or is but just beginning. They are looking forward to a time in which they shall win out of the new conditions of their age a new triumph because of the truth: a time which shall be characterized by the ideas that seem to them the noblest and most just, even as the past was either characterized or redeemed by the truth their fathers saw; a time in which they shall find their scope, achieve their task, say what they have to say, and dedicate what they have to spend. For with them there is, or should be, the gladness and confidence of morning; and with what-

ever thankfulness and reverence and admiration they may look back to the victories of the past, the victories which have won for them the very ground on which they stand, still they know that it is only in sham fights that men can simply mimic former victories; that it is on other fields, amidst other difficulties, and, it may be, with other weapons that their battle must be fought, and their service rendered in the cause of God and of His truth.

Such are, I think, roughly stated, the two great tendencies or currents of influence which are always telling in the course of human life. Still more roughly it might be said that they are the tendencies generally characteristic of the old and of the young: the elements which they respectively contribute to the development of history. The distinction is such as one can often see, real and deep, though not marked by any sharp, precise line. Differences of training and temperament often take the place of difference in age. The boundary is indefinite, and there is constant interaction over it; for the scenes of history succeed one another like dissolving views, and the lineaments and colours of that which is passing away can be traced long after that which is coming in has begun to gather strength and clearness. Hard outlines are seldom true to nature; yet when

we stand back a little and try to get a broad view, we can scarcely doubt, I think, that two such currents are acting on the affairs of men; and as we watch the surging tide of change, whether in the leaping waves or in the multitude of swirling eddies, we see that human history is for the most part *τόπος διθάλασσος*, a place where two seas meet.

II. Surely, then, if it be true that at point after point in the world's course, in its preparation for the second coming of Christ, there are these two forces to be felt telling on the way things take: if the two groups of characters and convictions which I have tried to describe are always present in that silent and unconscious conference of mind with mind, where the drift of human thought and opinion is decided—then we may be confident that there must always be a work for each to do, a gift for each to bring, towards the fulfilment of the Will of God. He maketh the outgoings of the morning and of the evening to praise Him; so long as it is day we must work the works of God, each according to the powers he has gained, the light that he has seen, the experience that has trained his judgment, and disciplined his will. So long as it is day each must do all he can of that which he can do best, and it may be that no man knows when he can do most, when the gift that it is

his to bring may tell most for the cause of God and for the good of man. But we can be sure that there is a true part for us all to bear at every stage of life, whether we be young or old: a contribution that we have to make, being what and where we are, to the welfare of the world: an offering which God, Who has placed it in our power, looks to us to bring. And we can see, I think, how large a part of the worth and happiness of a man's work, both in his earlier and in his later years, depends on his bearing towards that tide of life, that drift of feeling and conviction which is not his own. The relation between the generation that is passing away and that which is coming on is always full alike of difficulties and of opportunities on both sides; and there is a deep pathos in the frequency with which the opportunities are missed and the difficulties aggravated. Let us keep our minds back from any thought of judging where the blame should fall; let us only think how pitiful it is when those who might enrich and gladden and invigorate each other's lives (each bringing what the other lacks, each thankfully welcoming from the other's hand what lay beyond his own reach), instead of this stand off and look askance with mutual distrust or fear, or even scorn, letting themselves fall back, after only a half-hearted effort towards

sympathy, into that despondency, or impatience, or suspicion, which blocks with an ever-increasing barrier all the ways of mutual understanding and influence. We may recall the great disasters which in bygone ages have been thus wrought; but to some extent we may see the same dreary misconception and misuse of the relation between old and young going on in many fields of life. We may see it in the history of a nation, or of the Church; it has been prominent among the causes of religious discord and divisions; and I venture to think that it has sometimes cost much waste of time and strength in our academic and collegiate life.[1] And often, surely, the same tragedy is going on in the life of many a home: and nowhere perhaps is it more pathetically played; as father and son, or mother and daughter grow conscious, sometimes with silent pain and sometimes with scarcely veiled resentment, of an ever-widening severance, a perpetual and almost irrevocable ebbing of sympathy and trust. I think that there can hardly be a sadder thought to realize than that; for all the while the years are passing by so swiftly, and the help that each needs from the other, the joy that each might minister to the other, is wasting away unused, un-

[1] This sermon was preached in the University Church of Great St. Mary's, Cambridge.

sought, until it is hopelessly too late to seek it; wasting like water that sinks into the desert sand, while but a few yards off the traveller lies down despairingly to die of thirst. Is it not true, brethren, that there is no relation of life in which men have greater need of help and guidance and self-discipline than in this of which I have been trying to speak: the relation between that which is passing away and that which is coming forward; between that which the young are apt to call old-fashioned and that which the old are apt to call new-fangled? It is difficult indeed. But the grace of God is given for the hallowing, the illumination, of every relation of life; and it is the very work of grace to transform difficulties into opportunities. So let us try to see how this difficulty is touched by the light of the Christian faith.

III. In the passage which I read for my text, St. John is, as has been well shown,[1] halting for a moment and calling vividly before his mind the characters and positions of those to whom he writes. He is about to close one part of his letter with a great appeal for unworldliness; and he stays to consider on what grounds he can presume a readiness for that appeal in those to whom he sends it. Twice

[1] Cf. Bishop Westcott *in loco*.

do they seem to stand before his gaze: each time he sees them first as one group, then as parted into two; each time he marks first a warrant for his confidence that is common to them all, and then the special warrant that he has for making his appeal to the older among them, and to the younger. "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake"—there is his first ground of hope about them all, both old and young; but in each of those two classes he marks a distinctive note that promises an answer to his words, "I write unto you, fathers, because ye know Him that is from the beginning;" "I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the evil one." Again he seems to see them standing all together, old and young alike his little ones in Christ: "I have written unto you," he says, changing the tense, it may be, as he resumes his writing after some interruption, "I have written unto you, little ones, because ye know the Father," and then, just as before, he turns first to the old and afterwards to the young: he repeats to each the peculiar claim on which before he had rested his appeal: "I have written unto you, fathers, because ye know Him that is from the beginning;" "I have written unto you, young men, because"—and here he lingers on his former words,

and amplifies them, as though with something like that special love and eagerness with which a parish priest thinks of those who are giving to their Lord the full vigour of their early manhood—"because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one."

Let us try briefly to gather up the teaching of this passage: necessarily foregoing the consideration of many points of very suggestive detail. And first let us mark the thoughts that rise in St. John's mind as he regards separately the elder and the younger among those to whom he is appealing.

(*a*) Each class, then, stands before the Apostle bearing its distinctive gift, characterized by the peculiar power which lifts the standard of its hope and effort, and binds it to hear and to obey Christ's bidding. There is first the matured discernment and experience, the steady penetration of the old. They "know Him that is from the beginning." Faith has made them clear-sighted, and experience has deepened and confirmed their intuition: they have learnt what it is that is really going forward under all the apparent confusion and disorder of the world, and Who it is that through the strife and din ever has been, ever is, carrying on the work of love; and knowing Him they have found the clue to life, and

grown surer of its meaning, and less likely to be led aside from the true aim of effort and self-concentration. Others may be impatient of the twilight, others may lose heart when hopes prove false, or may sacrifice the greater to the nearer object; but he who knows Him that is from the beginning will endure as seeing the Invisible—

> "He holds on firmly to some thread of life—
> (It is the life to lead perforcedly)
> Which runs across some vast distracting orb
> Of glory on either side that meagre thread,
> Which, conscious of, he must not enter yet—
> The spiritual life around the earthly life:
> The law of that is known to him as this,
> His heart and brain move there, his feet stay here."[1]

And then, on the other hand, in the young there is the glad enthusiasm of consecrated strength, the glow of victory and enterprise. "They are strong, and the Word of God abideth in them, and they have overcome the evil one." The natural vigour of their age is lifted up and hallowed and assured in the warfare to which Christ has called them: they will not "faint and be weary," for they "renew their strength" in abiding communion with the Eternal Word; and in the thrilling sense of conquest they are sure that greater is He that is in them than he that is in the

[1] R Browning, vol. iv. p. 193, ed. 1888

world. The fresh and bracing air of triumph fills their hearts with hope: they rejoice in this, that the spirits of evil are subject unto them; they are confident of mastery in Christ's Name "over all the power of the enemy."

(*b*) Thus, then, in the prerogative graces of the old and of the young, St. John sees ground for making his appeal with a good hope. He looks to that which God the Holy Ghost has made of their age and of their youth, and he is not afraid to bid them to further ventures for Christ's sake. As they stand apart he has been insisting on their distinctive powers: each has that which will give penetration and definiteness to the appeal as it falls upon his ears; each has something of his own, something in his own experience and consciousness which quickens a distinct receptive faculty, something which will wake and stir at the Apostle's words. But beyond and above these separate gifts there are the two great master truths to which he points as dominant alike in the experience of all; the truths that, high and steadfast as the arch of heaven, span from end to end the Christian life: those strong supreme convictions which are the light and strength of every age, availing most of all, wherever they are ruling a man's heart, to guard him from the things

which make us slow to hear God's voice, and dull to see His way in the various relations of this earth. "Your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake," and "Ye know the Father." These are the all-controlling, all-transforming truths for every period and every task in life; in their light the Christian course begins, they give the strength of perseverance, they sustain the glow of eventide; many things change around a man as he advances in his journey through this world, but as he draws near its close, weary and travel-stained, he lifts his eyes to those same heights on which they rested as he set out in the freshness of the morning. No change has told on them; only it may be, by the Divine mercy, he sees a little clearer now the forgiveness of sins and the Fatherhood of God. And thus it is that when he speaks of these St. John makes no distinction between old and young; these are truths whose power he presumes in all who are Christ's; truths in whose ever-remembered presence all must stand and work together, as forgiven and as children.

IV. The forgiveness of sins: the Fatherhood of God. Can it be, brethren, that in the constant recollection, the advancing realization of these truths, we may find the help we need in that frequent difficulty of which we have been thinking? Is it thus that we

may learn to do our true work in every stage of life, and to be wise and just and generous towards those whom the broad difference of age or temperament may tempt us, if we are careless or wilful, to think irreconcilably and impenetrably unlike ourselves? It is so easy, on either side, to acquiesce in such differences as insuperable; it is so hard at once to bear one's own witness to the truth of which one's self is sure, and yet to persevere in courageous generosity and trustfulness towards those whose thoughts and ways belong to another generation than one's own. It may be that from those two great truths, in whose light St. John forgets the difference of age and youth, some help may come; help, perhaps, only the deeper and surer for coming indirectly; for telling rather on ourselves than on our difficulties. In our own hearts, or in the history of the past, we may discover some of the faults that darken counsel and make men prone to misunderstand and to suspect each other; such faults as pride, impatience, wilfulness, despondency; or, issuing more or less from these, that fear of being beaten which makes men withhold the opposition which they should have offered; the dread of being wounded or of seeming slighted; the exaggeration of fragments till they seem the whole truth; the disinclination to keep judgment in suspense; the failure to allow for that

which may be hidden in the unexplored; the love of symmetry, or paradox, or epigram; reluctance or prevarication in acknowledging one's blunders. Surely we may be stronger to resist such things as these if we realize the seriousness and urgency that is disclosed in human life since Christ was crucified that man might be forgiven, and the strength of hope that should abound in those who know the Fatherhood of God. "Your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake:" the words recall to us our deepest need, our uttermost unworthiness; but in the same moment they lead us to the Cross; and there falls on life an awe in which the thoughts of self-esteem and self-assertion, of vanity and petulance, die down for very shame. "Ye know the Father:" infinite in power and in wisdom and in goodness: ever watching over this world, and working out in many ways the will of love:—how, then, is it possible to be faint-hearted or despondent, or to doubt that in the coming years His glory shall appear as in the ages that are past? Let us fasten our thoughts upon the Cross of Christ and lift our hearts to our Father Which is in heaven; and we may find it easier with reverence and self-distrust simply to do what work we can, to be patient under the discipline of incompleteness and obscurity, and to hope that much which we think strange and un-

promising, much even which, so far as we can judge, we feel bound in duty to resist, may have its hidden purpose and value in His sight. And as the evening of life falls on us, He will guard us from the true sadness of old age: from

> "The inward change
> On mind and will and feelings wrought;
> The narrowing of affection's range,
> The stiffness that impedes the thought;
> The lapse of joy from less to less,
> The daily deepening loneliness." [1]

He will save us from all this; and, if it please Him, give us grace to say our Nunc Dimittis with unfading hope: thankful to believe that our eyes have seen His salvation, and that He Who has shown us, unworthy as we are, some fragment of His work, may grant to those who shall come after us to see His glory.

V. I was led to speak of these things by the thought of him in whose stead I have been suffered to come here to-day.[2] We are slowly learning at Oxford as this term goes on what we have lost by Aubrey Moore's death. We knew how rare a mind his was,

[1] W. Bright, "Iona and other Verses," p. 148.

[2] The Rev. Aubrey L. Moore, Hon. Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, Tutor of Magdalen and of Keble College, who was to have preached the University Sermon on the Sunday on which this sermon was preached. He died on January 17, 1890.

how true and resolute and fearless and delightful he had always been; but we hardly realized, I think, at how many points we should find ourselves longing in vain to hear his voice: and to some of us it seems as though Oxford can never be to us as it was while he was there, to bring clearness and courage into all perplexities, and to enrich all interests and hopes.

God gave us many blessings through his life. But in nothing, perhaps, was he more singular and noble than in the power he had of delighting with equal generosity, equal helpfulness, in the best qualities, the distinctive excellences, of men of all ages. Very few, I think, can enter so thoroughly as he did into minds so widely diverse. It seemed as though his vivid and penetrating intellect were lifted by great moral qualities to a level where it could work in steady victory over the faults and blunders which so often spoil the worth and limit the beneficence of mental brilliancy. Thoroughness, reverence, consistency, humility, patience, unworldliness,—these seemed, by God's grace, ever growing in him; these made the keenest mind that I have ever known to be always bringing help and gladness alike to old and young. His love for truth was, I think, like that which Francis of Assisi bore to poverty: he would always

go where truth led: for truth, he knew, could not betray him: and it seemed in his work as though indeed his love for truth had cast out fear. May God, from Whom all good gifts come, grant to His Church in the needs that now are on us and in those which seem swiftly to be drawing near, some who will work for her as Aubrey Moore was working: in steadfastness and self-control, in courage and simplicity and love.

XIX

SIN AND LAW.

"The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law."

1 Cor. xv. 56.

The first aspect of these words is clear and vivid. They come before us and demand attention with a power to which neither the simplest nor the most critical mind can be insensible. There is something deep in them which goes straight to something deep in us. The rough lad who hears them read at his father's funeral in the village church may know where they touch him, and what it is they ask of him; the priest who reads them may be feeling how no familiarity changes in the very least the sharpness and penetration of their challenge; the most thoughtless may be finding that for once he cannot choose but stay to think. "The sting of death is sin;"—we may say what we will, we may almost do or think what we will; but while we live, and know that we

must die, those words will keep, please God, some power to get at us and to recall us to ourselves.

I. The warning and the challenge, then, with which we are at once confronted, may be plain enough. But a change comes as soon as we begin to look into the words—to try to frame a definite conception of the truth which was filling St. Paul's mind and ruling all his thoughts as he wrote. We cannot be content with discovering expressions more or less analogous in his other letters: for here the words fall within the strong inclusive hold of a great purpose; and parallel passages elsewhere may be suggestive, but can hardly be decisive in regard to their dominant and inmost meaning. And as we try to keep our minds fixed upon them, as we labour to think out into clearness and reality some answer to the question in what sense is sin the sting of death, and the law the strength of sin, we may feel that we are touching truths which we can never grasp; that behind the words we use are vast, mysterious presences, whose import and issues and interdependence we can only know in part; and that the fragment we discern shades off into depths and distances far beyond our ken. What sin and death and law may in the fulness of their meaning be, we cannot tell; and that partial apprehension which, if we are

faithful and obedient, suffices amply for the guidance of life, the discipline of character, and the increase of light, will not suffice us if we want at once to round our thoughts into a system or to answer all the questions we can ask. "The sting of death is sin;"—it would be hard to say how far St. Paul is thinking of that unnatural power which accrued to death[1] when man fell and sin entered into the world; when, as one has said,[2] "by sin death became a king, and got him a dominion, pale, hideous, terrible;" when "he clothed himself with terrors, and made himself a palace of mankind." Again, it would be hard to say how far the Apostle is thinking of that more awful scene which lies beyond the day of death; how far, as he speaks of death, he links with it that certainty of the judgment to come which could shake even the mean and lustful heart of Felix with a terror that he could not hide. And then, "the strength of sin is the law:" here again many lines of thought are suggested when one reflects that probably about twelve months after he wrote these words St. Paul was writing the Epistle to the Romans; though I venture to think that such suggestions must be treated as subordinate to the de-

[1] Cf. St. Athanasius, "De Incarnatione Verbi," iii.-v.

[2] Cf. Bishop Milman, "The Love of the Atonement," p. 38.

mands of the passage in which the words here stand, and to their close connection with the preceding clause;—so that we must not lose hold upon the thought that in some especial way it is to be the sting of death that sin is made strong by the law. Thus many avenues of meditation open out before us as we gaze into the depths beyond the words: and each, it may be, looks as though it stretched further than our utmost strength of penetration. It is with consciousness of this that I would try to speak this morning only of one fragmentary thought, which seems to rise out of the words, and which at times, perhaps, may bring, by God's grace, something of their force to bear on our lives.

II. "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law." Yes: for "sin is lawlessness."[1] Those words of St. John's carry us to the inner and unvarying character of sin: whatever outward form it wears this is the common, constant quality of it; this we shall find at the heart of it. It is, says the Bishop of Durham, "the assertion of the selfish will against a paramount authority. He who sins breaks not only by accident or in an isolated detail, but essentially the 'law' which he was created to fulfil."[2]

[1] St. John iii. 4.

[2] Cf. Bishop Westcott on the Epistles of St. John, *in loco.*

It may be "the law of his own personal being, or the law of his relation to things without him, or the law of his relation to God:" for we may distinguish these three, though all alike proceed from God, as rays from the central light of His Eternal Law, and though none can be broken without infringement upon all. But whether it be primarily against his own inner life and health and growth that a man sins, or against the society in which he lives, or against Almighty God Who is waiting to have mercy on him—whether it be the love of God, or the love of man, or the true unselfish love of self, that he disregards and casts aside in sloth or wilfulness or passion; in every case the ultimate, the characteristic note of his sin is still the same: it is lawlessness: it is the abuse of will, thrusting away the task, declining from the effort, refusing the sacrifice wherein lay the next step towards the end of life, the man's one *raison d'être:* it is the distortion of faculties, the wrenching aside of energy, the perversion of a trust from the purpose marked upon it, from the design which conscience seldom, if ever, wholly ceases to attest, to a morbid use, to a senseless squandering, a listless, wasteful, indolent neglect, a self-chosen and self-centred aim. Whether the sin be quiet or flagrant, brutal or refined, secret or

flaunting, arrogant or faint-hearted, its deep distinctive quality, its badness and its power for havoc lie in this—that the man will not have law to reign over him; that he will do what he wills with that which is not in truth his own; that he is acting, or idling, in contempt of the law which conditions the great gift of life, and is involved in his tenure of it.

(*a*) "Sin is lawlessness:" and to persist in any sin is to go on, with ever-increasing ease and senselessness it may be, beating off the everlasting Law, ignoring or defying the essential rules of moral health and spiritual growth, rejecting in the Law the Lawgiver Who created us to find in its ways our joy and strength. So do men go on who sin against the law of their own personal being. For instance, let us mark for a moment that dull rebellion of lawless thoughts; the perverseness, the ever-deepening disorder of a mind that swerves from its true calling wilfully to loiter or to brood about the thoughts of sin; about thoughts of sensuality, or of jealousy, or of self-conceit. The high faculties of memory, reflection, fancy, observation, are dragged down from their great task: day by day the field for their lawful exercise is spread out before them: all the wonder, the beauty, the mystery, the sadness, the dignity and wretchedness, the endless interests and endless

opportunities of human life and of the scene which it is crossing—these are ever coming before the mind which God created to enter into them, to find its work and training and delight and growth amidst them: while over all His creatures, He Himself, the Most High God, is ready to lead on the mind from strength to strength, preparing it for that surpassing sight in which it may hereafter find its ceaseless exercise and perfect rest—the sight of His uncreated glory. Such is its lawful course: such are the good works which God has prepared for it to walk in: whatever may by nature be its strength or weakness, He will enable it by grace for such an end as this. And yet, all the while, in the dismal lawlessness of sin, it stays to grovel among the hateful thoughts of mean, degrading vices; or turns day after day to keep awake the memory of some sullen grudge, some fancied slight; to tend the smoky flame of some dull, unreasonable hatred: or to dwell on its own poor achievements, its fancied excellences, the scraps of passing praise that have been given to it, the dignity that its self-consciousness is making laughable. Surely it is terrible to think that a man may so go on, and so grow old, continually stumbling further and further from the law of his own joy and health.

(*b*) Let us mark, again, in the case of luxury, how

a man may refuse year after year to listen to the law of his relation to his fellow-men; how he may be ever putting off until the end of this life the day of reckoning with that law which God fastened into his very nature when He framed him for the privilege, the happiness, the responsibilities of a social being. To gather round one's self, in ever-growing plenty and elaboration, all the means of comfort and pleasure which civilization brings within one's reach; to shelter, and enrich, and decorate, and soothe one's daily life with the outcome of others' toil and ingenuity; to take whatever one can get of all that has been won by the labour, the experience, the inventiveness, the suffering of the past and of the present;—to let all this flow towards one for the ease, the pride, or the pleasantness of one's own lot, and then to make no real contribution to the work of one's own day;—to shirk one's share of hardship and fatigue, to bear no part, with whatever gifts one has, in the painful efforts, the unselfish ventures, the exacting strain of mind or body to their utmost strength, through which the social order, that makes all this comfort possible, may move on its slow, costly course of progress towards a better, juster, happier, more peaceful state:—how can a life like this seem other than a continual lawlessness; a plain

abuse of the conditions of one's place among mankind; an unnatural absorption of that which one is suffered to receive only in order that, only so far as, it may make one better able to repay one's due and thankful tribute to the welfare of others? It may be possible for some of us to thrust off that demand, to keep that law of social life at arm's length, as it were, year after year; it is possible for most of us to meet it with miserable inadequacy, with glaring disproportion between that which we receive and all that in any way we give. But conscience witnesses that wilful luxury is lawlessness; and that those who go on fancying that more and more is necessary or reasonable for themselves, while they think less and less of what is certainly necessary for others, must somehow have to meet the Nemesis of violated law. For "the poor shall not alway be forgotten: the patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever"—and "the Helper of the friendless" cannot in the end let man have the upper hand.

(*c*) Or think again of the lawlessness of a prayerless life: the disorder, the disproportion, the atrophy and wasting that must come when the faculty for communion with God is never used, and love, the first law of our relation to Him, is never stirred by the realization of His Presence, the recollection of

His Love. The nature that is endued with the capacity for prayer, the soul that can be filled with the disclosure of His Goodness, the life that was meant to find its highest exercise, its point of illumination, its way to rise, in seeking Him, cannot without hurt refuse all this. Prayer is, for spiritual beings, a law of health—a law which we may put back and ignore persistently in this life if we will, but which we cannot change. The desire to pray may disappear, just as for a lazy man there may cease to be any pleasure in the healthy use of his limbs: like him, we may find it hard, distasteful work at first to take up again what we have long abandoned. But if we yield to that distaste, if we acquiesce in our inertness, we are withholding the effort which an essential law of our life demands from us; silently and sluggishly, or in impatience and vexation, we are saying that we will not have law to reign over us.[1] God bids the soul press on to claim its goodly heritage; and the soul of the prayerless thinks scorn of that pleasant land and gives no credence to His Word. And so that which was made for Him is imprisoned in the world; that which should hunger and thirst after His Right-

[1] "Faculties without any acquired habits witness for God and condemn us." Benjamin Whichcote, quoted by Bishop Westcott, "Religious Thought in the West," p. 385.

eousness is set to make what it can of the substitutes which this life offers; that which can receive the Infinite and the Eternal Love is silenced with the things of sense and time.

III. Our own personal being, our relation to society, our relation to Almighty God; each has, we know, its law: and great is the peace that they have who love that law; and those who seek it, walk at liberty. But while this life lasts, for its few precarious years, we can, if so we will, dispute, reject, evade, ignore the law. But not for ever; we must meet and own it some day: for lawlessness is sin; and sin, if we are not trying now by the grace of God to deal with it, must be the sting of death. For, surely, when we try to think what the moral law is, and where, as men in every age have owned, it lives and has its being, it is hard to see how we can demur to words like these: "Those things that are held within the vault of heaven, cannot flee from heaven save by drawing near to it; for howsoever far they go from the one part of heaven, by so much do they approach the other part. And even so, though a man will not be obedient to the Divine will and ordinance, yet can he not flee from it; for if he sets himself to flee from under the will that bids, he runs under the will that punishes."[1] We cannot think, if we try to think

[1] Cf. St. Anselm, "Cur Deus Homo," I. xv. Also Hooker, "Of the

at all, that the soul, when it has done with this world, can go on trifling with the laws that it has slighted here: we know that sooner or later, somehow or other, that essential demand, "Fast linked as Thy great Name to Thee, O Lord," must needs be reckoned with; and that the career of wilfulness must have an end. And Death, as it comes among us, ought to make us think of this. For it is the great, indisputable witness of the arrest of wilfulness, the folly of a lawless will. In its awful steadfastness, its refusal of all compromise, resource, appeal, evasion, it shadows forth, as nothing else in this world, the ultimate certainty of law. No man, however rich, or powerful, or insolent, or ingenious, can for one instant say it nay, or make the smallest difference in the way it deals with him; the traveller might as well attempt to check the avalanche that is already thundering upon the fields of ice and snow above the ledge of rock on which he stands. We may come to terms with many of our troubles: almost all bodily pain may now be more or less alleviated, though not quite all; when sorrow comes, some of us may perhaps be able to divert our minds from it, or to harden our hearts; we may refuse to face the difficulties of our day, and make up phrases to conceal its miseries;—and civilization has made many

Laws of Ecclesiastical P lity," I. iii. 1, and note; St Thomas Aquinas, S. Th. 1ma 2dæ, xciii. 6.

inventions for prolonging the comfort of a selfish life; but there is no way of making terms with Death; and when he comes, the utmost wealth has nothing to offer which he is not already clutching. Abruptly the sheer certainty of law breaks in among our confusions, and half-heartedness, and crooked ways: away go all the subterfuges, the half-truths, the means of forgetfulness whereby men get off facing facts; and the puny, lawless, wilful heart is brought to book. Even if it could mean nothing more than this, that we are left to be for evermore what we have chosen to become, how could we bear to think of it?

IV. It is amidst such thoughts as these that we may come to know the meaning and the power of the Cross of Christ, and the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour dying for us. You will remember what are the words that follow those of which we have been thinking, "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, Which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—St. Paul had known that grace of repentance, that power of renewal which the astounding Love of God had sent into the world. For him, old things were passed away, and all things were become new; he had found that penetrating reality of pardon which changes the whole look of

life and death; and amidst the things of time his conversation was in heaven. And so he springs in an instant from the awful thoughts of sin and death to the unhindered gladness of thanksgiving. Thousands since then have known, in part at least, what he knew of God's victorious and pardoning grace; and we, in His infinite compassion, may know it too: for us, too, He has stored within His Church the means of that great deliverance, the power of that glad renewal. Yes, for all the past, for all our lawlessness and shame and backwardness, St. Paul's thanksgiving may be ours yet. Only it is good, it is necessary, for us to remember what was the life, the habit of mind and work, out of which those thankful and triumphant words arose in the very face of death. It was the life of one who lived by the faith of the Son of God; as the slave of all men, constrained by the love of Christ; in weariness and painfulness, and in much patience; as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing all things: one who counted not his life dear unto himself, that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received; and who, having suffered the loss of all things that he might win Christ, still in all simplicity and truth could only judge himself to be the chief of sinners.

XX.

THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

"The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

St. John i. 5.

It is hard to say with any certainty what is the exact meaning of the latter part of this verse. St. John is speaking of the way in which the life of sinful men has been visited and penetrated by the light of God. And as his gaze travels back over the years that are past, he marks one constant sign of God's long-suffering. "The light is shining in the darkness;" in the midst of all the gloom that has fallen on the world he can discern an ever-present gleam of brightness.[1] And then, it seems, he looks back to a past stage, or passes, it may be, from point to point, in the history of the relation between the darkness and the light. How has the Divine radiance been met and dealt with by the

[1] *Cf* Bishop Westcott, *in loco*.

obscurity it has thus invaded? "The darkness," St John writes, "laid no hold on it." The word he uses may have either of two meanings, and they are meanings which point to diverse lines of thought. On the one hand, the purport may be that the darkness did not grasp the light, did not apprehend it or lay hold on it as a prize or a possession, but, as it were, stood apart from it, as alien or indifferent, or without capacity for it, as rejecting or disregarding it. Or, on the other hand, the picture, the associations, which the word is meant to raise, may be of a different kind; it may touch the note of triumph rather than of pathos; it may suggest thoughts of the enmity that has been baffled rather than of the blessing that has been missed; the darkness, it may mean, did not overtake the light, did not come down on it, or close in on it, so as to enwrap and overwhelm it. It was not as the night that falls upon the earth, enshrouding, hiding it, and hindering the traveller on his road, the labourer in his work. No, the darkness men had gathered round them had no such power over the light of God; it was arrested and kept back by that unearthly brightness, and it "laid no hold on it."

The word, then, which St. John employs may have

either of these two meanings. The balance of evidence and likelihood seems, on the whole, in favour of the second; but the first also is upheld with arguments which cannot be explained away, which retain real force, even though it may be less than that which is found on the other side. In such a case we might fairly take from each of the two meanings so much of its teaching as is not inconsistent with the other. But we are on firmer ground if we can penetrate to the thought which underlies them both—the broad and deep conception with which the word, in its first and simplest import, spans their difference. And they meet, it seems, in laying stress on the strange truth that is told us in the first half of the verse: in developing, as it were, the paradox which St. John has just set forth—"The light is shining in the darkness." We have never realised, perhaps, the strangeness of the phrase. We think at once of the light streaming through the gloom into which it has been brought, as the sunshine rushes into a dark room when the shutters are thrown back. But this is not what St. John sees as he watches the sinful world that "the dayspring from on high has visited." No, the light, he says, "is shining in the darkness." The light is there, but the darkness is not swept away; the darkness is still thick and heavy, but the light is

not bereft of its purity and splendour. In the history, the course of life, at which St. John is gazing, he discerns them both, plain and unblent, retaining each its own character in the presence of the other. Of any shifting of the border-line between them he does not speak as yet: elsewhere he points to that. "The darkness," he can say, "is passing away."[1] But here his mind seems dwelling only upon this: that the light is there, and the darkness too. And, he adds, as though to insist upon the paradox which guards the truth, "The darkness laid no hold upon the light." There had been moments, perhaps, in the "glad, confident morning" of the Church's life when it seemed as though the darkness swiftly might lay hold upon the light, and be transformed by apprehending it; and certainly there had been times when it was hard for faith to keep at bay the thought that the darkness was closing in upon the light to overwhelm it. For St. John had stood by the Cross of Jesus; he had seen that appalling semblance of successful hatred; he had felt again the sickening desolateness of the oppressed as Nero's persecution broke upon the Church; he had known, it may be, the yet drearier and more disheartening misery, as the storm that had gone by rolled back again under Domitian's savage

[1] 1 St. John ii. 8.

tyranny; and he had had to bear that which must be the keenest trial of courage in old age, to see fresh perils ever gathering round those who had not known, who could not know, what he knew. And thus the solemnity of bygone anguish, of conviction deepened through much tribulation, may have filled his heart, and touched his very hopefulness with awe and sternness, as with the retrospect of such a life he wrote:— "The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness laid no hold upon it."

"The light is shining in the darkness"—the light, unconquered; the darkness, undispelled. It seems indeed a paradox. Yet, as we fix our thoughts upon it, we may well forget its strangeness in the sense of its exact correspondence with the facts of actual experience. For surely this is still the task, the test of faith, and truthfulness, and patience — to recognize alike the darkness and the light in human life; to realize, with equal justice, equal sincerity, the necessity there is for shame and fear, and the cause there is for hope; on neither side to trifle with the facts: to own both the actual intensity of the darkness, and the actual energy of the light that shines in it. In various ways it brings a heavy strain on a man's faith to realize the strength, the malignity, the subtlety of evil in the world. Many

of us, it may be, can recall the way in which, when we were young, older men received at times some utterance on our part of easy hopefulness. Without being either cynical or despondent, they yet made us feel, perhaps, that they had passed through something which we had yet to face, and that we should probably find the exercise of hope a more difficult and expensive duty as we went on. They looked at us somewhat as an experienced guide is apt to look at anything like jauntiness in the earlier stages of a long expedition. Their confidence, very likely, went with ours and rested on the same grounds; but they had known and we had yet to learn how strong and massive are the forces of discouragement. The cruelty of lust and avarice, the brutal insolence of strength or riches; the miserable passions that break out when conventional restraints are loosened; the madness of unreasonable, unforgiving hatred; the insincerity that can live on under fair words and religious profession;—it tries the justice, the balance of a man's mind and heart when these things first come home to him, not in plays or novels, not as studies of character by moralists or poets, not merely in the history of the past, but in the urgent, irrepressible experience of his own life. It tempts him to despair; it whispers suggestions of

'that utter infidelity, the disbelief of goodness. One hardly knows how men can bear the discovery, the recognition of that darkness, save in the strength of that unfailing light which has invaded it, and which is shining in it. For—blessed be God—if the darkness seems intense, and if we dare not try to attenuate its gravity, still the light is real and steadfast—the light, unowned it may be and unloved, yet never overborne; the light that beats upon the darkness, working on, perhaps, in ways we cannot see, towards conquests which may be known when the time of final severance, of righteous judgment comes. This is the strength of Christian hope; this is what makes it different from any natural buoyancy, any good-humoured readiness to make the best of life, any timorous disinclination to be told how bad things are. It can face the facts of evil, because it believes in the absolute reality of good. In His life Who as on this day was born for us, the Word made Flesh: in that surpassing evidence of the love of God; in the great humility and patience of our Lord; in His immense compassion; in the perseverance of His care for all men, even for the ungrateful, the disappointing, the disloyal; in the Will that chose to die for the thankless and unloving, we have seen the full disclosure,

the revealing of that light whose forecast gleams had been the strength of all true hope before He came—that light which never since has ceased to shine amidst the darkness. We are keeping now His birthday Who was made very man, without spot of sin. We lift our hearts to God for the dawn of the one perfect life in human history: the life in which the full splendour of goodness was made manifest to men. Besides all else that Christmas means, it speaks to us of the unveiling of that light which is the spring and stay of all our hope when the persistence and the confidence of evil come against it. Yes, for still we know that light is shining in the darkness: over against all that can suggest despondency, there rise the lives of those in whom His grace, His presence is achieving, though it be but slowly and imperfectly, the reality of holiness. There are some with whom we always can regain our hold on hope—some whose very voice may seem enough to renew the look of life for us, to rebuke our faintheartedness, to bring back the freshness of our aspiration. To be with them, to come under the influence of their personality, does more for us than the most convincing arguments or the most exuberant display of optimism ever does; for when we are with them we feel

again the reality of that power which has come forth from God to work in human life—the power that is stronger than all the violence and subtlety and stubbornness of evil; the power upon which hope fastens as the pledge of God's presence, the brightness of His light, and the beginning of His victory.

"The light is shining in the darkness." Let us take these words to heart, as telling us the ground, the principle of that frank, courageous, sober hope which faces facts, which "maketh not ashamed." The duty of such hopefulness stands high among the lessons which we may have gained from his teaching and example who not many weeks ago asked me to preach here to-day for him—lately the Dean of this cathedral.[1] I do not think that hope came easily to him. He cared too much for truth to rest in any partial or one-sided view of what was going on around him; he knew too much of human life, in bygone ages and in this, to exaggerate the significance of isolated tokens of encouragement in the complex movement of society, or to think that any course of amendment will continue

[1] This sermon was preached in St. Paul's Cathedral on Christmas Day, 1890, according to the request of the late Dean, confirmed after his death by the Chapter, of St. Paul's.

long when men have once begun to withdraw from it their devotion or self-sacrifice; he thought too much of men's responsibility in the exercise of judgment to let himself go with any pleasant current of general self-satisfaction. No one ever could have called him sanguine; but through all the manifold anxieties of our day he never stood with the faint-hearted or despondent. God gave him courage and sincerity and strength to look steadily at all that was threatening, discouraging, and perilous; he took to heart the things that made it hard for us to hope; but through them all, above them all, he saw the goodness of Almighty God: the present powers of the world to come: the light shining in the darkness. And he dared not hesitate to hope. It is such hope as that that makes men in the time of trouble brave and calm themselves and able to sustain the hope of others. May the God of hope, Who knows our need, in the fulness of His might and wisdom, grant us grace to keep fast hold on the assurance of His love, and to open our hearts and lives to welcome the brightness of His light.

XXI.

A GOOD EXAMPLE.

BISHOP ANDREWES: HIS TIME AND WORK.

THERE are many ways, I think, in which we may be helped by the study of those passages in the history of the English Church which seem to have been characterized by especial elements of difficulty and distress. For so we may be taught to take a truer measure of the troubles and imperfections and anxieties of our own day; to see how hopefully a man may try to deal with them, and to do his work in spite of much that he would fain have otherwise; refusing to let the wholesome sense of urgency degenerate into the weakness of panic or fretful impatience. Again, we may thus deepen our loyalty and our love towards the Church, which in such trials has evinced her God-given power of endurance and advance, and, holding her course through the dimness and the storm has emerged with surer strength of experience and

self-realization for whatever still remains to be undertaken or endured. But we may also learn a lesson which will bear more directly on our own conduct, helping us to bestow aright whatever of effort, labour, service, and self-sacrifice we may have to contribute to the setting forward of God's cause in our own age. For plainly every one of us may, if he will, do something, be it much or little, towards making that which will be the history of our generation; and the abiding worth of whatever he can do will depend, perhaps, mainly on his just discernment of the chief issues that are being either decided or kept open in his day; on his correcting in his own mind the misplaced emphasis of common talk and controversy; on his throwing whatever strength he has into the real, and not the merely apparent crisis of the perpetual conflict between truth and error, between good and evil, or between the better and the less good. It needs some insight and calmness and independence to see clearly and steadily what matters most in one's own day; and men have, for instance, said sometimes that the Church was in danger, without apparently suspecting that by their own worldly anxiety and partisanship, and their own neglect of simple duties, they were, indeed, doing more to endanger their real trust than any political opponent ever could have

done. It is a safeguard against all such misdirection of vehemence and solicitude, it may help us to give to the real task of our day whatever energy or influence we have to dedicate, if, from time to time, looking back to past ages of especial trial and confusion, we single out in the *mêlée* of the fight those whom time, the great arbiter of all blunders, has approved as the men who were not misled; who saw for what they must contend, and held to that; who were strong enough to do without the encouragement of easy triumphs, fighting neither with small nor great, but only with the antagonist whose onset was making for the true centre of their position—the men who not only meant well, but went right. As we watch them, standing apart somewhat from the throng of their contemporaries, misunderstood, perhaps, or distrusted by many on their own side in the struggle, quietly and chivalrously holding fast the principle, the right, which they had seen to be the secret of freedom, integrity, and hope; foregoing for its sake obvious advantages and tempting compromises; we may, perhaps, be able to gain a little more of the faith and patience of that quiet insight whereby they were enabled to guard intact the truth or liberty which later ages prized aright as it disclosed its latent strength and fruitfulness.

It is with the hope of some such gain that I would ask you to look back to-night across just three centuries; from the eventful scene of London in the later years of Elizabeth's long reign, to single out one figure; and to try to form some estimate of the service which Lancelot Andrewes rendered to his generation and of the good that from his life has accrued to those who have come after him.

I. Three hundred years ago. Let us try to bring before our minds, with as few words as may be used, the anxieties which seem likely to have been foremost in the thoughts of any thoughtful man who in 1589 was caring, working, praying, for the Church of England. He would be conscious that a certain change for the better had passed over the aspect of her affairs within the last twelve months; that an imperious and engrossing fear had been, though not dispersed, yet greatly lightened and moderated. The ruin of the Spanish Armada had not only thrilled men's hearts with the sense of a national deliverance which may well have seemed unique; it had also told upon the course and temper of religious thought.[1] The dread lest the supremacy of Rome should be enforced in England was not so near and huge on the horizon at the end of 1588 as it had been at the

[1] Cf. Keble's Preface to Hooker's Works, sec. 35.

beginning; and in the relief thus gained some were entering upon larger and worthier ways of thought, and laying aside the hesitation and reserve with which under the stress of fear they had spoken of their heritage. But, however thankfully an English Churchman in 1589 may have recalled the events of the preceding year, however gladly he may have felt the abatement of one great hindrance to the Church's freedom in realizing her prerogative, in developing her resources, in putting forth her strength, in grappling with her task; still the reasons for alarm, the excuses for faint-heartedness, were neither few nor slight. A strong and resolute party, including some who were learned and able, and many who were earnest and unworldly, was bent upon setting up in England the discipline and government which Calvin's masterfulness had made paramount at Geneva. Some who were thus minded had seceded from the Church's worship; others, more numerous, more weighty, and more dangerous, were endeavouring, while they retained their positions and exercised their ministry, to intrude the Genevan system, silently and steadily, into the English Church; and, with the help of two men of very real power, a plan had lately been devised by which this alien structure might be quietly built up within the Episcopal, and athwart

its lines, so as gradually to supersede it.[1] And then beyond the range of tacit secession and of conformity for innovation's sake, there were sects clamorous and active—one tampering with the basal principles of Christianity, and, it was alleged, of all morality also;[2] the other, with far more power and result, lifting the great banner of independence, taunting and upbraiding those who let "I dare not" wait upon "I would," crying for "reformation without tarrying for any,"[3] and calling upon the "Queen to forbid and exterminate within her dominions all other religious worship and ministers" than their own.[4] And as three hundred years ago a quiet man was thinking of these things, and wondering what would come of it all, he would grow sick at heart as he saw from time to time the gross and ribald nonsense that was being poured out in abusive pamphlets from the secret presses; and he would grow yet more wretched and despondent when the Church's cause was dishonoured by an attempt to answer such pamphlets in their own style. He well

[1] Cf. Neal's "Puritans," vol. i. pp 204, 205: 265, 266: 303-305; Fuller's "Church History," ix. 103, 142.

[2] Cf. Archbishop Sandys' "Sermons," p. 130.

[3] Robert Browne in 1582.

[4] H. Barrow's "Platform," quoted by Gardiner, "History of England," vol. i. p. 37.

might say, as one great layman did about that time, "Two principal causes have I ever known of atheism, curious controversies and profane scoffing. Now that these two are joined in one, no doubt that sect will make no small progression;"[1] and he would hardly wonder that some were venturing to assert, as they saw this travesty of controversy, that the religion which men thus degraded was itself but a shrewd device for keeping society in order.[2] But nothing, perhaps, would make his heart so heavy and apprehensive as the apparent inability of many among the clergy to meet in any way the needs and perils which beset them; the slowness with which they were emerging out of the disorder and neglect disclosed in the earlier years of Elizabeth's reign;[3] the ignorance, and incapacity, and sloth, and worldliness with which in many places they were still so senselessly provoking the victorious onset of any antagonist who could wield against them the rightful and unfailing strength of a high purpose, a pure life, and a truth sincerely trusted.[4]

[1] Lord Bacon, "An Advertisement touching the Controversies of the Church of England." Probably written about 1590.

[2] Cf. Hooker, V. ii. 2–4.

[3] Cf. the returns elicited in 1561: quoted from Strype's "Parker," by Perry, "English Church History," p. 277.

[4] Cf. Hooker, V. lxxxi. 1.

Such may have been among the thoughts which rose in a man's mind three hundred years ago as he watched the course of Church affairs and tried to guess their likely outcome; such were some of the conditions under which Lancelot Andrewes sought and found his work.

II. If a Londoner had been asked in 1589 who were the most remarkable preachers in the City, the answer would probably have included three names that soon were very famous throughout England. One certainly would be the name of Richard Bancroft, rector of St. Andrew's Holborn, treasurer of St Paul's, and chaplain to Sir Christopher Hatton, the Lord Chancellor of England. For Dr. Bancroft had lately come to the front of discussion and conflict by a sermon preached at Paul's Cross early in the year[1] — a sermon in which many have traced the first public utterance of that more adequate and courageous defence of the Church's ancient order and discipline which seems to have been released by the destruction of the Armada. It would have been characteristic of Bancroft to be the first to say what many had been thinking; and he was probably, at the time we are recalling, still busy with the assailants

[1] Reprinted in Hickes's "Bibliotheca Scriptorum Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ."

whom his impetuosity had provoked.[1] But there was a greater man than Bancroft preaching every Sunday morning in the Temple Church; neither popular nor happy there, but with strength and diligence and learning of the rarest splendour, working steadily at a great book which should outlive all the controversies that had made his fame and spoilt his peace. For Richard Hooker was still Master of the Temple, though he was longing to regain the blessings of obscurity in a country parish; and while some thought his sermons tedious and difficult, and others who had sided with his now silenced adversary, Travers, bore a grudge against him for the past, still men could not be unmoved by his massive thought and knowledge, by the power of his patience and holiness, and by the memory of those exciting Sundays, when there were almost as many writers as hearers in the Temple Church, and the gravest Benchers were busy morning and afternoon taking notes of the discourses through which the Master and the Lecturer argued out their differences.[2] And then, with Hooker and Bancroft, Lancelot Andrewes surely would be recalled, as prominent among the younger men who were closing with the

[1] Cf. Strype's "Life of Whitgift," i. 559, *seq.*

[2] Cf. Fuller's "Church History," bk. ix. §§ 49 62.

difficulties of the day. For, junior to Hooker by two years, to Bancroft by eleven, he had at the age of thirty-four already taken his place in the strongest work of his day. Let us glance back over the earlier stages of his career.—He had hardly entered boyhood when the enthusiasm of the true student came on him; and there is something pathetic in the picture of the lad at Merchant Taylors' School needing to be driven out into the playground from the books he loved—the books for which he rose at four in the morning and lingered far into the night. He, like Hooker, owed much to the watchfulness and insight of his schoolmasters, first at the Coopers' Free School and then at Merchant Taylors'; whence in 1571 he went to Pembroke Hall at Cambridge, holding one of the eight Greek scholarships newly founded by Thomas Watts, the Archdeacon of Middlesex, and further helped in 1573, (as Hooker, too, was helped more than once,) by Robert Nowell, a great lawyer in London, wise and large in his bounty.[1]

I have the copy of Demosthenes which Andrewes used at Cambridge; in the title-page he has written with his own name that of his benefactor, the Archdeacon; and if the beautiful and elaborate Latin

[1] Cf "The Towneley Nowell Manuscripts," edited by Dr. Grosart, p. 184.

annotations in the margin of the volume are indeed his, they illustrate the scholarly diligence and precision which made him, it is said, "one of the rarest linguists in Christendom," knowing more than twenty languages, and "so perfect in the grammar and criticism," "as if he had utterly neglected the matter," and yet "so exquisite and sound in the matter," "as if he had never regarded the grammar."[1] It is not strange that in 1576 he was elected a Fellow of his college, receiving soon after the distinction of an Honorary Fellowship at the new foundation of Jesus College, Oxford. To this period of his life belongs, I think, his earliest published work, a wondrous monument of painstaking and conscientious toil.

A great French Bishop of this century has told us that for many years he wrote at full length all his catechizings; and his biographer says that ten volumes of manuscript attest that dutiful and hidden labour.[2] Lancelot Andrewes in the same stage of his life seems to have taken like pains over a task not very different. "The custom of catechizing in church was, in those days" (says a recent historian of Cambridge), "systematic and general. . . . While

[1] Bishop Buckeridge, in the sermon preached at Bishop Andrewes' funeral. Cf. Fuller, "Church History," xi. 1. 46.

[2] F. Lagrange, "Vie de Mgr. Dupanloup," i. 82.

not one minister in ten was permitted to preach, all were expected to catechize. With the view, therefore, of rendering those in the University who were destined for the clerical profession more competent to the discharge of this primary duty, Andrewes initiated at Pembroke a series of Saturday and Sunday afternoon catechetical lectures, designed to serve to some extent as illustrations of the best method of teaching the elements of Christian belief." He soon had gathered round him a large class, both from the University and from among the neighbouring clergy; and we are even told that a man "was scarcely reputed a pretender to learning and piety in Cambridge" (at that time) "who had not made himself a disciple of Andrewes by diligent resorting to his lectures; nor he a pretender to the study of divinity who did not transcribe his notes, which ever after passed from hand to hand in many hundred copies."[1] It appears that after his death inaccurate and incomplete reproductions of these notes were published till in 1675 his own papers were elaborately edited, in a folio of five hundred pages.[2]

He does not stand alone in having prepared himself

[1] Mullinger's "History of the University of Cambridge," vol. ii. pp. 487, 488.

[2] "The Pattern of Catechistical Doctrine at Large" (Preface to the Reader).

for the most complex tasks by taking immense pains over the simplest; so illustrating the peculiar efficacy of the work that does not show, and the wide range of the great law, that "he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."

We have little knowledge of his earlier work in Holy Orders, save that he was singled out for special trust and encouragement by the Earl of Huntingdon and by Sir Francis Walsingham, travelling with the former to the north, and there evincing, it is said, those controversial powers which he afterwards employed with reluctance and with distinction. In 1589, it seems, the year to which we have especially been looking back, a threefold charge was given to his care: he was made Vicar of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, a Residentiary Canon of St. Paul's, and Master of his old college, Pembroke Hall, at Cambridge. The first of his printed sermons, which was preached before the Queen, bears date in this same year.

So, then, we may think of him as now prominent and active in the central life of England—a student still, as he was to the end of his laborious days; jealously guarding for this duty the forenoon; so that it has been said that "the rare exceptions to his usual sweetness and gentleness of temper were provoked by those who disturbed" his morning hours.

"They were no true scholars," he used to say, "who came to speak with him before noon."[1] But now the external activity of his life was considerable and the demands of a conspicuous position were beginning to come upon him. On most Sundays he would preach twice to his parishioners, though we are told in the sermon preached at his funeral that "he ever misliked often and loose preaching without study of antiquity, and he would be bold with himself and say, when he preached twice a day at St. Giles's, he prated once."[2] Nor, it seems, did he neglect the quiet round of daily duties in his parish; for the "Manual of Directions for the Sick," which was published after his death, is said to have been "conceived and used by him in his ordinary Visitation of the sick, when he was Vicar of St. Giles's, Cripplegate." At St. Paul's he read the divinity lecture thrice a week in term time; and he is described as "walking about the aisle, ready to give advice and spiritual counsel to any who sought it;" for, we are told, he was "deeply seen in cases of conscience."[3] Nor, for all he had to do in London, was his work at Cambridge neglected. "As an administrator" (writes one

[1] Cf. R. W. Church, in "Masters in English Theology," p. 63.
[2] Bishop Buckeridge in "Andrewes's Sermons," p. 295 of vol. v.
[3] H. Isaacson: cf. Fuller's "Abel Redevivus"

concerned especially with his University work)—"as an administrator he was no less successful than as a teacher. He found his college in debt; he left it" (thanks to his care in business and to his personal generosity) "not only with the debts paid off, but with a reserve fund of £1000 at its command."[1] In 1601 he was made Dean of Westminster; and there, as in the old days of his catechizing at Pembroke, the true teacher's love of teaching came out in spontaneous painstaking. "He did often supply," says a Westminster scholar, "the place of both head schoolmaster and usher for the space of a whole week together, and gave us not an hour of loitering time from morning to night . . . And all this without any compulsion of correction; nay, I never heard him utter so much as a word of austerity among us."[2]

But austere he could be when need was: strict and firm enough to refuse two bishoprics in Elizabeth's reign, because he could not accept them without conniving at some plunder of Church property:[3] grave, says Fuller, with a certain patristic gravity, which "in a manner awed King James, who refrained from

[1] Mullinger, *ubi supra*, p. 488.
[2] Cf. Mullinger, *ubi supra*, p. 487, note 3
[3] Cf. Bishop Buckeridge's Sermon

that mirth and liberty in the presence of this prelate which otherwise he assumed to himself."[1] It is striking to combine with this the assurance that "all evidence attests the lovableness of his nature;"[2] and that "of all those whose piety was remarkable in that troubled age, there was none who could bear comparison for spotlessness and purity of character with the good and gentle Andrewes."[3] For thus we see in him that singular union of tenderness and decision which seems to be the distinctive beauty of a life of prayer. All the chief elements of strength may seem to have met in him—learning, ability, power of work, facility of expression, charm of manner, purity of purpose, courage, holiness; so that it is not strange that great honours came to him unsought, and did him no harm. Elizabeth made him one of her Chaplains-in-Ordinary; James, soon after his accession, made him Bishop of Chichester, and thence translated him first to Ely, and afterwards to Winchester. He was, moreover, Almoner, Dean of the Chapel, and a Privy Councillor to James and to Charles I., in the second year of whose reign he passed away, at the age of seventy-one. The

[1] Book xi. sec. 46.
[2] R. W. Church, *ubi supra*, p. 67.
[3] Gardiner, ii. 33, quoted by R. W. Church.

manner of his life has been summed up by the Dean of St. Paul's in a few vivid words: "When he was called into public employment he lived, as great Church officers did in those days, through a round of sermons, Court attendances, and judicial or ecclesiastical business, varied by occasional controversies and sharp encounters, on paper or face to face, with the numberless foes and detractors of the English Church and State; from great Cardinals, like Bellarmine and Du Perron, to obscure sectaries, like Barrow and Mr. Traske. . . . It was the life of many men of that period. What is specially to be noticed in his case, is the high standard which was recognized both in his learning and his life."

So he lived, in constant converse both with the great scholars, philosophers, statesmen of his own day, and with the great saints and doctors of the past; resolute, laborious, consistent, sympathetic, effective, amidst the things of this world, just because so large a part of all his time and care and love was spent upon the things unseen. The manner of his death is told in the sermon preached at his funeral by the Bishop of Ely, his successor as Vicar of St. Giles's—told in words which touch so dominant a note of all his life that I will venture to quote them at length :—

"After the death of his brother, Master Thomas Andrewes, in the sickness time, whom he loved dearly, he began to foretell his own death before the end of summer or before the beginning of winter. And when his brother Master Nicholas Andrewes died, he took that as a certain sign and prognostic and warning of his own death; and from that time till the hour of his dissolution he spent all his time in prayer, and his prayer-book, when he was private, was seldom seen out of his hands, and in the time of his fever and last sickness, besides the often prayers which were read to him, in which he repeated all the parts of the Confession and other petitions with an audible voice, as long as his strength endured, he did—as was well observed by certain tokens in him—continually pray to himself, though he seemed otherwise to rest or slumber; and when he could pray no longer with his voice, yet by lifting up his eyes and hands he prayed still, and when both voice and eyes and hands failed in their office, then with his heart he still prayed, until it pleased God to receive his blessed soul to Himself."[1]

His body was buried in the little chapel which, till its destruction in 1830, stood at the east end of the Lady Chapel of St. Saviour's Church, in South-

[1] Bishop Buckeridge in Andrewes's Sermons, vol v. p. 297.

wark. At that date it was removed to the Lady Chapel, and his name was often mentioned in the struggle which saved that chapel from being also demolished a few years later.[1] Wherever he rested in his life his unfailing generosity left its trace. It is pitiful to think how the irreverence and neglect of later generations have dealt with the place of his burial. It is a reproach which now, I trust, is soon to be, so far as it is possible, put away.

III. I have reserved but very scanty time in which to speak of that which, most of all, I wish that I could duly bring before you—namely, the character of his especial service to the Church of England, the secret of his work's effective value; the conviction which guided him to see what were the real issues of his day, where lay the great strength of the Church's cause, and what were the principles never to be let go, never to be trifled with. It is hard to speak briefly of these things; and I must speak from only a fragmentary knowledge of his writings, with large indebtedness to those who have more worthily studied them. But this, I think, is clear. His place is in that great line of English theologians who, beginning in the later Elizabethan period, carried

[1] Cf. W. Taylor, "Annals of St. Mary Overy," and "Papers relating to St. Saviour's, Southwark," in Bodleian Library.

forward the realization, and elicited the energy and worth of those essential elements of vitality and strength which the Church of England had, in the providence of God, carried through all the struggle and confusion of the sixteenth century. The great safeguards of continuity, the pledges of renewal, had been preserved by those who hardly seem, in some instances, to have understood the worth of the treasure they were defending—its worth, that latent and unending power of fruitfulness which it disclosed in the hands of their successors, and is disclosing still. There are splendid names along that line; but I doubt whether we can owe to any among them much more than to those two who stand close together near the beginning of the series, Hooker and Andrewes. For it seems that they especially developed and secured for the Church of England the strength which lay in her power to appeal to two great witnesses of her authority and truth—to reason and to history. A recent writer has finely said, "I believe, with a conviction the strength of which I could hardly express, that it is the vocation of the English Church to realize and to offer to mankind a Catholicism which is Scriptural, and represents the whole of Scripture; which is historical, and can know itself free in face of historical and critical

science; which is rational and constitutional in its claim of authority."[1] These three great elements of strength and courage had been carried unimpaired through the work of reformation: the first had been vivid in the consciousness and work of its earlier agents; but the second and the third, guarded no less really, present no less certainly, waited for the touch which should release their potency and blessing. And as Hooker, in his great treatise, maintained, against the faithlessness of Puritan distrust and scorn, the place and dignity of human reason, "aided with the influence of Divine grace,"—showing that "the way to be ripe in faith" is not necessarily to be "raw in judgment,"[2]—so Andrewes, outliving Hooker by a quarter of a century, deployed, as it were, upon the field of thought and controversy the force that issues from the strongholds of history.[3] He realized and trusted and displayed the strength of an historic Church; he was fearless when he felt that history was with him, and careless about apparent advantages which history encouraged him to disregard. In a vigorous passage of his answer to Bellarmine he heartily accepts, and

[1] C. Gore, in Preface to last edition of "Roman Catholic Claims."

[2] III. viii. 13, 4.

[3] Cf. R. W. Church, in "Masters in English Theology," pp. 105, 106, whence the thought of this comparison is taken

wields as one familiar with his weapon, the famous canon of the Catholic faith—that it is that which has been believed always and everywhere and by all.[1] He meets Du Perron at point after point of his attack; frankly accepting the verdict of antiquity, even where the English Church had not spoken explicitly, as in regard to prayers for the dead,[2] frankly untroubled by any criticism which has not history behind it. And the same profound belief in the future of the Church that can fearlessly appeal to the witness of the past, the same unqualified reliance on the strength of a continuous history, makes him apparently indifferent to advantages which men less sure of their footing are apt somewhat restlessly to desire:—indifferent, for instance, to present and obvious completeness. "I doubt," says the Dean of St. Paul's, "whether Andrewes cared much for that intellectual completeness of theory which we make much of." And this strong patience in unfinishedness seems characteristic of one who was always resting on the witness of the past. For history, I suppose, would certainly not teach him that the purest truth had always been embodied in the compactest system. There never was a scheme more perfect in logical

[1] "Responsio ad Apologiam," p. 20, ed. 1610.
[2] "Strictureæ," p. 9, ed. 1629.

coherence and finish than the scheme of Calvin at Geneva—a scheme so perfect and disastrous that it well might serve for a perpetual warning against the attractions of completeness. And as the resolute faithfulness of his appeal to history made Andrewes content to do without the luxury of theoretic neatness—a luxury which we can hardly hope to have in this fragmentary world save at some expense of truth—so also did it strengthen him against all hankering for peace where it involved the blurring of principles or the forgetting of facts. "We wish not," he writes to Du Moulin, "we wish not a concord that is but pieced and patched up, but an entire, absolute agreement without piecing and patching;" and while he prays for the union of all reformed Churches, it is, he is careful to tell Du Moulin, that they may be united in that form of government, that bond of polity which traces its origin from the very cradle of the Church; against which he who sets himself sets himself against all antiquity—that government which (with whatever considerateness he may speak of defects which he is willing to attribute to the iniquity of the times) he never hesitates to uphold as of Divine right.[1]

So he laboured and contended; so he preached,

[1] *Vide* "Responsiones ad Petri Molinæi Epistolas Tres," ed. 1629.

ever striving to uplift and quicken men by the power of a religion in which the communion of saints was felt as a reality—a religion "which claimed kindred with all that was ancient and all that was universal in Christianity; which looked above the controversies and misunderstandings of the hour to the larger thought and livelier faith and sanctified genius of those in whom the Church of Christ has recognized her most venerated teachers."[1] And so, above all else, he prayed; and it may be doubted whether any uninspired words have done more to teach men how to pray in truth, and purity, and generosity, and self-abasement than that manuscript on which he never thought that other eyes than his would fall: "the manuscript that was scarce ever out of his hands, and that was found worn by his fingers and blotted with his tears."[2]—The distinctive lesson of such a life as his is neither hard to find nor easy to fulfil. For it never has been and it never will be easy to forego the power, the readiness, the security, the certainty, which seem to be promised us by any system that is complete and rounded-off and logical. There is a true instinct in us which desires perfectness; but it is a false, impatient craving which would

[1] R. W. Church, *ubi supra*, pp. 97, 98.

[2] Bishop Horne, in Preface to "Private Devotions," p. 8.

demand it in this world. Nor, again, will the thought of concord and reunion ever lose its rightful beauty, ever cease to command our aspiration. It is a true instinct in us which desires peace; we cannot doubt it when we remember Who is the Author of peace and Lover of concord. But here, again, it is a faithless haste that for the sake of agreement and co-operation disregards the witness of history and imperils the strength of an inviolate consistency by surrendering or obscuring in some popular compromise, some pleasant semblance of generosity, principles by which the Church, in spite of all the sins and perils of the past, has still maintained her continuity and renewed her strength.

It would be a true and fitting thought to take from Bishop Andrewes's work that there is no such strength as that of patience; the patience that prefers truth to symmetry, and facts to logic; the patience that makes men brave to say that there is much which they do not know, that there are many questions which will never be answered in this life, many wants and blemishes and troubles that the Church may have to bear so long as she is militant; the patience with which great men have been content to live on even to the end in seeming weakness,

in weary conflict, if only they might so hand down to their successors an undiminished heritage of light and hope and opportunity; the patience which Bishop Andrewes learnt, perhaps, in no other way so surely as in prayer.

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